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Editorial

One of the key ideas behind the founding of *The Journal of European Baptist Studies* in 2000 was to provide access for scholars from central and eastern Europe to place the fruits of their research in English in a wider context. This was to be of benefit to them and to open scholarship in central, eastern Europe, the Middle East and Central Asia for the attention of scholars in the west and to help scholars develop their careers. Over the past thirteen years we believe we have done that to some good effect.

Early in this phase we established good connections with András Szirtes from Hungary, at that time a lecturer in Systematic Theology in Budapest. András came to speak at conferences at IBTS, and his wife, Tünde, participated in our Certificate Programme. Sadly, András died of a severe form of leukemia and European Baptists lost the opportunity to enjoy his developing skills as a scholar and speaker. In this issue we pay tribute to him by printing an article based on a paper he gave at an IBTS conference some years ago. We are immensely grateful to his widow, Tünde, for permission to do this. András has left a legacy to European Baptist scholarship in the establishing, by Tünde and some of his friends (including current Hungarian students at IBTS) of a Theological Foundation (<http://www.evangelikal.hu>).

We also offer a further paper from the CEBTS Conference in Odessa in the summer of 2012 by our good friend and colleague, Michael Rohde from Elstal. He reflects on the challenge of helping ministerial students grow spiritually as part of their formation.

Chuck Faroe, a research student and missionary in Turkey, offers an extended review and interaction with the work of James K. A. Smith in his important book *Desiring the Kingdom*.

Andy Goodliff, a British Baptist pastor, takes up the challenge of a Facebook, Blog and Twitter exchange by Baptist scholars as to whether it is right to have a Baptist Sanctoral Calendar and, if so, how should it be compiled? The development of an idea from internet interaction to a paper in a journal is the first, we believe, for this *Journal*.

The Revd Dr Keith G Jones
Rector, IBTS

Can you teach spirituality?

Orientation, experiences and questions from a north-western perspective

Michael Rohde

I Orientation – Basic Insights

1. Spirituality

Spirituality¹ is not only a Christian issue; it is also a common² and cloudy term. It is necessary to distinguish between secular and Christian spirituality.³ In general, spirituality marks an attitude towards life that looks for sense and meaning because the seeker is convinced that there is something (an energy or awareness) or somebody (God(s) as personal being) beyond their own human nature. Christian belief is rooted in the biblical tradition that God is Trinitarian – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – who acted in historical incidents and with godly doings. Christian spirituality is substantially focused on a personal relationship with the God of the Old and New Testaments as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and is anchored in the *sola gratia extra nos*, the grace of Jesus Christ. Christian spirituality includes a spiritual life of piety through a wide range of rites, acts and deeds.

1.1 Science and Spirituality

There is a tense relationship between *science* and *spirituality*, especially in a north-western context. Christianity has always been a thinking religion.⁴ Science leads its thoughts methodically, comprehensively and is capable of reproduction, in a critical and distinct manner, arguing logically with differentiation and reasoning. At the same time spirituality seeks for forms

¹ This paper was presented at the Seventh Forum of the Consortium of European Baptist Theological Schools (CEBTS) and the European Baptist Theological Teachers' Conference (EBTTC) held from 9-13 July 2012 at Odessa Baptist Theological Seminary, Ukraine.

² Ulrich Köpf considers an increasing popularity in the term spirituality in religious and theological literature of the twentieth century. Cf. Ulrich Köpf, 'Art. Spiritualität. I. Zum Begriff', in: RGG 4 (Aufl. Tübingen, 2004), pp. 1589-1591, 1589. Christian Grethlein interprets this increased use as an expression of the desire of all people to have spiritual experiences but to keep at a distance traditionally used terms like piety or religion. Cf. Christian Grethlein, 'Art. Spiritualität. VII. Praktisch-theologisch', in: RGG 4 (Aufl. Tübingen, 2004), pp. 1596-1597.

³ Cf. Arne Völkel, 'Moderne Formen der Spiritualität', in: Theologisches Gespräch 36/2012 Heft 2 Kassel, 2012, pp. 55-70.

⁴ Cf. Wilfried Härle, *Dogmatik* (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1995), p. 15. Cf. also C.H. Ratschow, 'Das Christentum als denkende Religion', in: C.H. Ratschow, *Von den Wandlungen Gottes. Beiträge zur Systematischen Theologie* (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1986), pp. 3-23.

of spiritual life and is creating forms to live out faith and to be a follower of Jesus Christ. Therefore spirituality is a creation of the Holy Spirit, a movement inside a Christian and a 'going out' of a Christian. Spirituality is a Christian in existence. As Christian education teaches scientific views about the Bible, church history, systematic theology, and reflects practical and mission theology, there is often a gap to other dimensions of Christian Spirituality.

1.2 Aspects of Christian spirituality

Christian spirituality includes at least four dimensions:⁵

- The *rational* dimension seeks to deal with Christian belief in an intellectual, rational way. It is the supreme task of theology to believe in a reflective way and to express belief in words, speech and ideas.
- The *psychological* dimension of Christian spirituality touches mental health, self-perception and questions of guilt, shame and fear.
- The *social and missional* dimension of Christian spirituality includes the relationships between people and their relationship to the Triune God. Christian belief seeks the shalom of other people and includes salvation in political, economic and ecological aspects.
- The *personal* dimension of Christian spirituality reaches human self-awareness, *coram deo*, and the perception of God in relationship to oneself.

These four dimensions of Christian spirituality raise the question: can spirituality be taught?

Before I give some examples of difficulties and challenges, I will look at some biblical insights. This manner is not postmodern, because if you trust postmodern Christianity the 'great stories' came to an end. But a view to the way of teaching in biblical times will show us that our question is neither modern nor postmodern, it is just human within all periods of Christian education.

2. Biblical Aspects

2.1 Daily life experience teaches us

The wisdom of the Old and New Testaments is an international phenomenon, raising insights not by revelation but by experience of life

⁵ Cf. Völker, 'Moderne Formen der Spiritualität', p. 62.

and observation. Wisdom is not in opposition to knowledge or science, but the oriental style of understanding wisdom is to link theory and practice together. Wisdom is the skill to conduct your life and to gain the power of judgment in all moments of life.⁶ The Wisdom teacher in Proverbs observes, for example, the ‘field of the slothful’ and the ‘vineyard of the man void of understanding’ (Proverbs 24:30-34), discovers thorns and nettles and a broken stone wall; therefore, he concludes, how easy it is to achieve poverty. Observing daily life experience teaches the wise man. In many cases the observations of nature become parables of life. The wise person questions if reeds grow without water (Job 8:11.13) and compares this with a human who loses contact with the living God. Daily life teaches us, and biblical wisdom is a true know-how of how to manage our lives.

2.2 Jesus teaches us

Jesus of Nazareth is the great teacher.⁷ He teaches through stories and actions. His disciples are learning by observation and questioning. The first followers of Christ could learn by looking over his shoulder. In the story in Luke 10:38-42, Mary sat at Jesus’ feet and heard his words and, for that moment, it was the best place to be and what was needed. The teaching of Jesus is mostly through simple words and parables. Thus, spirituality is affected by the experiences within agrarian life and the life of fishermen, not philosophers.

2.3 Thinking and reflection teaches us (Paul)

All the letters of the Apostle Paul are soaked in a high level of the rabbinic education of Paul and his method of arguing in a discursive way.⁸ The spirituality of Paul and of his letters are provocatively intellectual and reflective; that Christianity is a thinking religion becomes obvious within the teachings of the New Testament. To think (*logizomai*) is a typical expression for Paul in confessing his belief: Therefore, we conclude, that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. (Rom 3:28).

⁶ Cf. Otto Kaiser, *Der Gott des Alten Testaments. Theologie des Alten Testaments*. Teil 1 (Göttingen: Grundlegung, 1993), p. 264. ‘Ein Mensch verdient das Prädikat, weise zu sein, erst dann, wenn er sich als den kritischen eigenen oder fremden Lebenssituationen mit Rat und Tat gewachsen erweist. In diesem Sinne nennen auch wir einen Menschen weise, wenn er den Schein durchschaut, sich nicht durch Leidenschaft oder Parteilichkeit verblenden lässt und daher in der Lage ist, in überlegener Weise situationsgerecht zu raten oder zu handeln.’

⁷ Cf. Gerd Theissen and Annette Merz, *Der historische Jesus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2. Aufl. 1997). Theissen and Merz distinguish Jesus as a poet of the parables (paragraph 11) and Jesus as teacher of ethics (paragraph 12).

⁸ Cf. Peter Stuhlmacher, *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments. Grundlegung. Von Jesus zu Paulus*, Bd.1, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2. Aufl. 1997), pp. 221-392, 253. Especially the teaching of Paul about the law is not systematically well ordered, but soaked with many different traditions gained from the Old Testament, from Jesus and the first Christian believers.

2.4 Rites and feasts teach us

Both the Old and New Testaments established and recommended rites and feasts to express belief in the sovereign God. The original agrarian feasts of the Levante became, in the tradition of the Old Testament, a ritual discourse about their own history, mainly of the Exodus.⁹ Baptism and the Lord's Supper were linked to the rites of the time of ritual washings and meals, but were revealed as sacraments of the new life in Christ. The rites of Judaism and Christianity teach, in a holistic way, what it means to be a part of the chosen people of God. All aspects of spirituality are linked together with the sacraments, for example, the rational argument of what, for instance, the Lord's Supper is about: the psychological dimension to be liberated from guilt; the social dimension to share food and to respect others ('unworthy' eating and drinking as in 1 Cor 11:27) and the personal dimension to be aware who man is *coram deo* (as a reconciled person).

II Challenges and Questions

If I personally look at the challenges of 'teaching spirituality in a north western context' there are four aspects on which I would wish to focus. They all refer to spirituality in the context of theological education or Christian education in the local church to tackle the question: Can you teach spirituality and, if so, how?

1. Spirituality and Education

Even though the people of the countries of north-west Europe are highly educated and reach high levels of literacy, there is a rising scepticism about dogmatism and institutions. The main way to make an evaluation of something is quite often, not by *argument*, but how it *feels*. At the local church level, Christian spirituality is losing the way of discussion, debate and argument. Generally, the typical Baptist Church no longer has a lively Bible Class or Sunday School for Adults, they don't read the memorandum for peace or a longer reasoned paper on a controversial topic, but they meet simply and share life. Although the necessity to debate about ethical, political, ecological, social and economical questions is increasing, the number of circles and people who conduct lively discussion are decreasing. Although the number of possibilities for different views are increasing and the questions in our world are getting bigger and bigger, the ability to

⁹ Angelika Berlejung, 'Heilige Zeiten. Ein Forschungsbericht', JBTh 18 (2003), pp. 3-61. Angelika Berlejung, 'Exkurs A. Feste', in: Jan Christian Gertz (ed.), *Grundinformation Altes Testament* (Göttingen, 4. Auflage 2010), pp. 78-81.

reflect and argue Christian beliefs is decreasing. Therefore Churches – not only Baptist Churches – are losing influence in public affairs.

Surely, at a scientific level, the argument is still alive, but the students we receive are generally not approaching life and Christian spirituality with a rational attitude. Therefore the reflection and arguments of Paul, and all biblical and systematical tradition, which argues like this, is losing its effectiveness and influence on Christian life, preaching, teaching, etc.

We are challenged as theological teachers, because the ‘average’ student today must first learn that thinking is necessary and can be fruitful for Christian spirituality and that reflection is not in opposition to faith. The historical way of interpretation of the Bible and its sources is widening the gap between yesterday and today. The way of historical exegeses which reveals that the world of the Bible is, first of all, strange and foreign, and that every theologian needs to discover this strangeness of the ancient world, makes the effort of academic studies of theology quite challenging.

How can theological education reach a new generation with the rational dimension of theology/christianity without boring or losing them?

2. Spirituality and Feelings (psyche)

The main expectation of the church seems to be to create great feelings. Emotions are overwhelmingly important for new and old media impulses, and the church is challenged to evoke such feelings with rites, services and atmospheric elements. Songs become highly emotional (romantic). Church ceremonies like weddings, funerals, blessings or other events are expected to meet the feelings of all participants in a deep way. Fellowshiping together can reach a level of ecstasy which replaces argument and a rational dimension.

How can theological education include the emotional dimension of spirituality without losing its deepness and awareness?

3. Spirituality and Experience

If observation and life experience are masters of teaching spirituality, we are challenged within seminaries and colleges, because many of our students are young in age and young in life and Christian experience. Most of them are well comforted, born and raised in quite a petted or spoilt community. Their heart is full of passion to serve the Lord, but sometimes they have never experienced suffering or sorrow, and cannot adapt to these situations from their own experience. Therefore the relationship between

feelings, experiences and an intellectual approach to faith can be unbalanced.

How can theological education and church life open up possibilities for young adults to experience different life and life-style situations?

4. Spirituality and Convivence

Some areas of the challenges to improve theological education today were tackled by Michael Kisskalt in 2010 at CEBTS. In light of the concept of convivence, he recommended:

1. Theological education, in the light of convivence, will not only broach the issue of sinfulness of the world, but also the issue of the presence of God in the world.
2. Already during theological education, you offer space and time for students to develop their own identity process. If you are aware of your own faith processes, later, in the pastoral and missionary ministry, you might concede these processes also to other people.
3. Theological education should practice convivence in and alongside its courses. It should always be clear, that the professors are also learners, and the students also teachers.
4. In order to learn to bring together convictional identity and life in its diversity, theological seminaries might develop structures and space where students and their theological teachers can share their lives with each other in addition to the theological content.¹⁰

5. Spirituality and Fears

Christian spirituality can help to overcome existential, mental, religious and social fears.¹¹

If Christian spirituality is guided by the reformatory principle *solus christus*, the believer can discover that in the midst of seeking infinity, but realising limitation, Christ is close in the midst of fear.

If Christian spirituality is guided by the reformatory principle *sola gratia*, the believer can discover that the fear to burn-out or fail is covered by the grace of God – you need to live with any mental fraction.

If scepticism about dogmatism is increasing, the basis of *sola fide* reminds us that Christian spirituality includes the adventure of your own

¹⁰ Michael Kisskalt, 'Mission as Convivence – Life Sharing and Mutual Learning in Mission. Inspirations from German missiology', *Journal of European Baptist Studies*, Vol 11, No 2, January 2011 (Prague: IBTS), pp. 5-14, 14.

¹¹ Cf. Völkel, 'Moderne Formen der Spiritualität', pp. 68-70.

decisions and spiritual self-reliance as a follower of Jesus Christ. Tradition is not (not even Baptist tradition) meeting the deep desires of spirituality, but rather the openness to be attracted to faith by God's love.

Those who want to belong to a group might, at the same time, want to be allowed to be different to others. A common language, songs and rites strengthen the commitment of a group. But the Holy Scripture prompts us to go beyond this horizon, because Christian spirituality leads us to love those who do not love us, to bridge gaps between humans, to lose social fears.

How can we rediscover the reforming principles to meet the fears of apparently temporary Christians in the midst of a changing society?

III Can you teach Spirituality?

Yes and no.

Yes, you can teach – in the pattern of the Bible, followers of Christ are taught through experience and observation, through lectures, through arguments, through rites and feasts. To follow these patterns we will need to continually reflect on the relationship between science and spirituality; to recognise the four (or more) dimensions of spirituality; to respond to the (post) modern challenges; and, in our theological education, to consider our feelings, intellect experiences and fears. The best way to meet these needs will be alongside the concept of convivence as a strong expression of God's love one to another by living and sharing life, experience and knowledge together.

No, you cannot teach spirituality as you would mathematics. You can practice, you can encourage, you can reflect. The teacher will be, unwillingly or consciously, a model. At the same time, every teacher is still a student in Christ's school. The reason that it is, in a way, impossible to 'teach' spirituality, is hidden in the secret of spiritual growth: it is the work of the Holy Spirit and not just an issue of training. But without training, the Holy Spirit will not fulfil what we began in Christian discipleship.

Revd Prof Dr theol Michael Rohde, Baptist Theological Seminary, Elstal, Germany.

In Pursuit of a Holistic Christian Pedagogy: Affectivity in James K. A. Smith's *Desiring the Kingdom*

Charles E. Faroe

'Soccer, you are everything to us!' proclaims the massive banner adorning an Istanbul stadium. Turkish soccer fans identify themselves by wearing clothing – and sometimes painting their faces – with their team's colours. Crowds congregate in cafes to watch soccer matches on big screen televisions, simultaneously erupting in cheers or groans when a goal is scored. And when their team wins a match, fans' cars clog the city streets for hours as they honk horns and shout slogans to celebrate victory.

James K. A. Smith,¹ in his provocative, award-winning book, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview and Cultural Formation*,² identifies such cultural behaviours as 'secular liturgy'. Smith argues that such behaviours reveal something fundamental about human nature and hence provide insight for effective Christian pedagogy. *Desiring the Kingdom* is volume one of Smith's forthcoming 'Cultural Liturgies' trilogy, which will present a 'philosophical theology of culture' (14). In this first volume, Smith's primary objective is to present a vision of how Christian colleges and universities can provide 'authentic, integral' Christian learning (11, 18n.3, 217n.4).

Smith grounds his project on an axiom: 'Behind every pedagogy is a philosophical anthropology' (27). In other words, how we teach is rooted in what we believe about the *kind of creatures* human persons are. Seeking to reform the 'cognition-privileged pedagogy'³ prominent in much Christian education, Smith sketches an *affective* anthropology: more than what we think or believe, we are defined by what we love. Our love, in turn, is 'formed' and 'aimed' through embodied, communal practices, embedded with a *telos* – a particular vision of 'the good life' (57-62). Smith designates 'practices of ultimate concern' as *liturgies*, intentionally blurring the line between sacred and secular and noting that such 'ascribing worth' (i.e. worshipping) is ultimately and inevitably formative (86-88, 131).

¹ Smith is professor of philosophy and adjunct professor of congregational and ministry studies at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

² James K.A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009). Hereafter page numbers will be given in parentheses in the body of the text. *Desiring the Kingdom* received the *Christianity Today* 2010 Book Award for 'Theology/Ethics' and the Word Guild of Canada 2010 Book Award in the 'Leadership/Theoretical' category.

³ Brent D. Maher, [review of *Desiring the Kingdom*] *Christian Higher Education*, vol. 9, (2010), pp. 286-89.

Thus, routine and undiscerning participation in cultural institutions can result in a ‘formation of our desire that is pointed away from the kingdom of God’ (85, 89-129). Smith’s prescription for counter-formation is intentional participation in the practices of Christian worship, which have embedded in them a distinctive ‘Christian social imaginary’, through which we ‘practice for the kingdom’ (155-214). Applying this model to his question of authentically Christian higher education, Smith envisions the ‘ecclesial’ university as ‘an institution of Christian formation, intentionally drawing on and incorporating the range of Christian practices that form desire and fuel the imagination’ (222).

Desiring the Kingdom’s intended audience is ‘students and teachers’, while volumes two and three of ‘Cultural Liturgies’ will be technical monographs addressing Smith’s philosophical anthropology and ‘current debates in political theology’, respectively (12). Smith writes in an engaging style making effective use of illustrations from literature and film. Smith’s ambitious project has elicited praise (for his critique of cognitivist education and his affective anthropology) and criticism (for positing the primacy of affectivity in cognition, his critique of worldview, a sacramentalism that privileges worship over other practices, and for the idealistic nature of his educational vision).⁴

Affectivity and Cognition in *Desiring the Kingdom*

Smith’s focus on the importance of affectivity for a holistic, robust anthropology is central to his argument in *Desiring the Kingdom*. In light of Smith’s axiom that pedagogy presupposes anthropology, attending to affectivity gains urgency for Christian education. While affirming Smith’s emphasis on affectivity, I offer the following critique of affectivity and cognition in *Desiring the Kingdom*, as a step towards a more nuanced application of Smith’s project. My critique is summarised by three statements, developed in turn below: (1) Affectivity is important for formation. (2) But affectivity should not be privileged as the preeminent locus of formation. (3) Smith rightly posits the centrality of the heart, but

⁴ *Desiring the Kingdom* receives praise as a ‘significant revision of the role desire plays in education’ (Robert S. Covolo, [review of *Desiring the Kingdom*], *Journal of Spiritual Formation and Care* vol. 3, no. 1, Spring (2010), p. 118.), but is censured as a ‘sustained attack’ on Christian worldview education (Elmer John Thiessen, ‘Educating our Desires for God’s Kingdom [review article]’, *Journal of Education and Christian Belief*, vol.14, no.1, [2010], p. 48.). Numerous respondents express affirmation tempered with reservation, e.g. David S. Guthrie, ‘Bravos and Buts’, *Christian Scholar’s Review*, vol. 39, no. 2, Winter (2010), pp. 220-22); Geoffrey H. Fulkerson, [review of *Desiring the Kingdom*] *Trinity Journal*, no. 31, vol. 2, Fall (2010), p. 307, and Maher, [review of *Desiring the Kingdom*], p. 289.

from the standpoint of biblical usage, overemphasises affectivity in his depiction of the heart (*kardia*).

Affectivity's importance

Ideas alone do not change us. Smith offers personal testimony to this fact: He observes that over the course of several years – in significant part through the writings of Wendell Berry – he had become ‘intellectually convinced’ about systemic injustices in the food industry. Yet Smith found himself reading Wendell Berry at the food court at Costco, a major international warehouse grocery retailer typifying many of the problems against which Berry argues. Smith observes that his intellect had been ‘recruited’ but his habits remained unconverted.⁵ Similarly, Smith uses George Orwell’s testimony in *The Road to Wigan Pier* to illustrate that formal education (in this case British public school) can result in affective formation more lasting than the intellectual content taught. Orwell says that public school reinforced ‘snobbery’ in ‘refined and subtle’ ways. *Visceral* prejudices (‘the lower classes smell...we were brought up to believe that they were dirty’) can persevere for a lifetime, while ‘[y]ou forget your Latin and Greek within months of leaving school’ (28-31). Learning that merely addresses the fact that the cognitive domain can be transitory; affective formation is persistent.

So how does affectivity function? Smith develops a sophisticated model of affectivity around three closely related concepts: Heidegger’s ‘background understanding’, Charles Taylor’s ‘social imaginary’ and the ‘adaptive unconscious’ of social psychological research (46-71). What do these have in common? They all function ‘behind’ our everyday conscious cognition. Heidegger, influenced by Augustine, posited that the most fundamental way we engage with the world is through ‘care’ or ‘concern’. (Augustine would call this ‘love’.) At the same time, in a departure from Cartesian subject-object epistemology where persons (construed as ‘thinkers’) observe the world, Heidegger recognised that at a more fundamental level, we live in and negotiate the world, using not *knowledge* but a nonconscious *background understanding*. Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor, influenced by Heidegger’s distinction between knowledge and understanding, extends this with his formulation of the ‘social imaginary’, which accounts for shared action within societies. The ‘social imaginary’ is ‘complex... extends beyond the immediate background

⁵ James K. A. Smith, ‘Worldview, Sphere Sovereignty, and *Desiring the Kingdom*: A Guide for (Perplexed) Reformed Folk’, *Pro Rege*, vol. 39, no. 4, June (2011), pp. 15-24. I am indebted to Dr James K. A. Smith for directing my attention to this article.

understanding... [providing] a wider grasp of our whole predicament: how we stand to each other, how we got to where we are, how we relate to other groups, and so on. This wider grasp has no clear limits... [and] can never be adequately expressed in the form of explicit doctrines because of its unlimited and indefinite nature.’⁶ Lastly Smith, citing the work of psychologist Timothy D. Wilson, amongst others, brings in scientific findings about the nature of the ‘adaptive unconscious’ which show, in keeping with Heidegger and Taylor’s philosophical constructs, that vast amounts of human cognition are processed nonconsciously.

Another way to describe the affective realm Smith sketches would be *influential but inaccessible*. Background understanding, the social imaginary, and the adaptive unconscious enable and influence our behaviour, but are, by definition, not directly accessible to conscious reflection.⁷ This situation creates a pedagogical conundrum: as Smith says, ‘education is primarily *formation*’ (19, emphasis original), but the formative realm of affectivity cannot be directly accessed by pedagogical methods. Here Smith makes an interesting move: he undertakes a discussion of *dispositions* (‘our precognitive tendencies to act certain ways and towards certain ends’), noting that there is a philosophical tradition of describing dispositions as *habits*, and then tying in the notion that *virtues* (and vices) are habit-like behaviours (55-56). Smith emphasises that, while habits are learned, they become “‘second-nature’...function *as if* they were natural or biological... [and become] default tendencies’ (56). Then, critically for his project, Smith reviews research supporting the idea that such value-laden, habitual behaviour is sustained – in the background – by the ‘automaticity’ of the adaptive unconscious and that ‘habits... are formed by practices’ (80-85).

Thus practices, rightly understood, have significant formative power. Practices are embodied and rich in affective stimuli. This is important because ‘it’s as if our appendages function as a conduit to our adaptive unconscious’ (59). Smith distinguishes between ‘thin’ practices lacking identity-forming significance (e.g. brushing one’s teeth) and ‘thick’ practices which are ‘meaning-full’ – value-laden and hence identity-

⁶ Charles Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginary* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), pp. 24-25.

⁷ Dreyfus comments, ‘Heidegger shows that this subject/object epistemology presupposes a background of everyday practices into which we are socialized but that we do not represent in our minds.’ (Hubert L. Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World: A Commentary on Heidegger’s Being and Time, Division I* [Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991], p. 3). Taylor says, ‘This approach is not the same as one that might focus on “ideas”...The social imaginary is not a set of ideas; rather, it is what enables, through making sense of, the practices of a society.’ (Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginary*, p. 2). Wilson defines the unconscious as, ‘mental processes that are inaccessible to consciousness but that influence judgments, feelings, or behaviour’. (Timothy D. Wilson, *Strangers to Ourselves: Discovering the Adaptive Unconscious* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002], p. 23).

forming (e.g. Sunday worship) (82). While we often make a conscious effort to gain skills and dispositions through practice,⁸ due to the nature of the adaptive unconscious, ‘automaticity can be acquired unintentionally’ (80). Participation in ‘thick’ practices can permit inadvertent formation of desires and dispositions inimical to God’s kingdom. Smith devotes a chapter to ‘exegeting’ the social imaginary implicit in cultural practices related to consumerism, sports and entertainment, and the higher educational system (89-129).⁹

A pedagogy that follows Smith’s affective anthropology will value practices because, while we cannot bring background understanding to the foreground, attention to practices can, in a sense, allow us to ‘access’ the inaccessible realm of affective formation. Affectivity *is* important to formation and Smith has provided an important corrective to reductionistic cognitivist anthropology and pedagogy. However, Smith’s proposal – or at least his discourse – falls somewhat short of a holistic approach that honours the rich inter-relatedness of the cognitive and the affective.

Affectivity not preeminent

As discussed above, Smith offers a corrective to the ‘cognitively privileged’ anthropology and pedagogy prevalent in much Christian education. Smith emphasises the importance of *holistic* anthropology and education. He says, ‘Many Christian schools, colleges, and universities – particularly in the Protestant tradition – have taken on board a picture of the human person that owes more to modernity and the Enlightenment than it does to the *holistic, biblical vision* of human persons’ (31, emphasis

⁸ Charles L. Campbell (following Michael Warren in *At This Time, in This Place: The Spirit Embodied in the Local Assembly* [Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1999]), distinguishes three levels of practices: (1) ‘Routine practices of the church’; (2) ‘Unconscious, culturally shaped practices’; and (3) ‘Intentional and disciplined practices’ (which are equated with Alasdair MacIntyre’s concept of ‘social practices’ in *After Virtue*); Campbell, *The Word Before the Powers: An Ethic of Preaching* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), pp. 134-39. Smith’s model tends to conflate these levels of practice. While Smith’s treatment of the adaptive unconscious and automaticity offer a mechanism for habituation at the affective level, MacIntyre’s formulation of practices as cooperative behaviour with standards of excellence that are systematically extended entails conscious, ongoing, interactive reflection and evaluation. I will take this point up in the next section of the critique.

⁹ The importance of practices is fundamental to Smith’s critique Christian worldview education (‘tinged with a lingering cognitivism’) and his recommendation of Taylor’s social imaginary: ‘By focusing on social imaginaries, the radar of cultural critique is *calibrated to focus on exegeting practices*, not just waiting for the blips of ideas to show up on the screen’ (p. 133, emphasis added). Smith comments, ‘...I do think there is something unique about Taylor’s account of the social imaginary – and that’s because it grows out of his reading of Heidegger – especially a “pragmatic” Heidegger of the sort you find in Hubert Dreyfus. There is an attention to practice in the discourse of “social imaginary” that I just don’t find in even the best “worldview” discourse, which still tends to be fixated on epistemic and theoretical concerns.’ (Personal correspondence from Dr James K. A. Smith, dated 6 December 2011).

added).¹⁰ Holism has been defined as ‘the theory that parts of a whole are in intimate interconnection, such that they cannot exist independently of the whole, or cannot be understood without reference to the whole, which is thus regarded as greater than the sum of its parts’.¹¹ However, in *Desiring the Kingdom*, ‘holism’ tends to refer more to the restoration of embodiment and affectivity than to fully honouring the ‘intimate interconnection’ between ‘thinking’ and affectivity in human persons. While it is not Smith’s intent to set forth a dichotomous relationship between intellect and affectivity,¹² his discourse emphasises the primacy of affectivity, creating the impression that affectivity is the preeminent locus of formation. Fulkerson observes, ‘...the dichotomy that shoots through the book – dividing worship and worldview, doing and thinking, liturgy and doctrine – is more rhetorically charged than carefully articulated and will probably establish the fault line of dis/approval for this book’.¹³

Smith’s language underscores the primacy of affectivity and sometimes presents ‘thinking’ or ‘the intellect’ in terms that constitute a straw man. Numerous examples are available, but I will cite a longer passage to illustrate in context the content and ‘feel’ of Smith’s discourse related to cognition and affectivity. Smith here discusses the idea that our love is affectively directed to a *telos* by means of a ‘vision of the good life’ (52). He says:

It is important to emphasize that this [vision] is a *picture*. This is why I have emphasized that we are fundamentally noncognitive, affective creatures. The *telos* to which our love is aimed is not a list of ideas or propositions or doctrines; it is not a list of abstract, disembodied concepts or values. Rather, the reason that this vision of the good life moves us is because it is a more affective, sensible, even aesthetic *picture* of what the good life looks like. A vision of the good life captures our hearts and imaginations not by providing a set of rules or

¹⁰Cf. also these references to holism: ‘holistic, affective, embodied anthropology’ (24), ‘education is a holistic endeavor that involves the whole person’ (39), ‘a much more holistic (and less dualistic) picture of human persons as essentially embodied’ (57), ‘the holistic character of human persons’ (62), ‘a better, more creational, more incarnational, more holistic anthropology’ (76), ‘practices of daily, gathered worship that are holistic, activating the imagination through bodily participation’ (211).

¹¹ ‘Holism’, Oxford Dictionary of English, 3rd Edition, 2010.

¹² In discussing the *cognitive* (‘a reflective, propositional way of intending the world that traffics in thinking and ideas’) and the *affective* (‘a prereflective, imaginative “attunement” to the world that precedes the articulation of ideas and even beliefs’), Smith is careful to state, ‘this distinction...is *not* an opposition’ (28,n.11, emphasis original).

¹³ Fulkerson, (review of *Desiring the Kingdom*), p. 306. Similar criticism has been made by Thiessen, ‘Educating our Desires’, Perry L. Glanzer, ‘The Thinking Heart’, *Christian Scholars Review*, vol. 39, no. 2 (2010), pp. 219-20, and ‘Moving Beyond Value- or Virtue-Added: Transforming Colleges and Universities for Redemptive Moral Development’, *Christian Scholar's Review*, vol. 39, no. 4 (2010), p. 391, and Severe, [review of *Desiring the Kingdom*], *Journal of Youth Ministry*, vol. 8, no. 2, Spring (2010), pp. 125,127.

ideas, but by painting a picture of what it looks like for us to flourish and live well. This is why such pictures are communicated more powerfully in stories, legends, myths, plays, novels, and films rather than dissertations, messages, and monographs. Because we are affective before we are cognitive (and even *while* we are cognitive), visions of the good are inscribed in us by means that are commensurate with our primarily affective, imaginative nature. This isn't to say that the cognitive or propositional is a completely foreign register for us (if it were, this book would be an exercise in futility!)... (53).

In this passage, Smith's characterisation hardly deals fairly with the richness and diversity of conscious cognition, emphasising dryly theoretical forms of thought ('doctrines', 'abstract, disembodied concepts', 'dissertations', 'monographs'). The various media and genres mentioned ('stories, legends, myths, plays, novels and films') do have significantly affective impact, yet our engagement with them is not unrelated to the cognitive. Smith says we are '*fundamentally* noncognitive' and our nature is '*primarily* affective' (emphasis added).¹⁴ Smith feels the need to qualify this characterisation by noting that 'the cognitive or propositional' is not 'a completely foreign register for us'. Yet even here, Smith's language is denominated in terms of the degree to which the cognitive is in some sense alien to human nature: '[not] *completely* foreign' (emphasis added).

Smith's treatment of affectivity creates a conceptual tension. It is easy to agree that *desire* or *love*, always aimed at a *telos*, an ultimate vision of the good, is fundamental to a biblical anthropology.¹⁵ Smith often uses 'affective' in reference to love or desire when describing persons. At the same time, as shown in the discussion above, Smith uses the term 'affective' to refer to what is 'prereflective' (i.e. nonconscious), and the term 'cognitive' to refer to what is 'reflective'. It is hard to concede that a holistic, biblical anthropology should grant primacy to the nonconscious formation of what we love. Thus Glanzer criticises Smith for 'downplaying the cognitive importance of Christian belief and identity' and aptly observes, '[t]he cognitive dimension of our love relationships should remain vitally important'.¹⁶

Smith makes a philosophical case for the 'priority of affectivity that undergirds and makes possible the work of the intellect' (17n2). However, a holistic anthropology, I will argue, should honour the ineluctable

¹⁴ Smith likewise says the 'core of our identity is located more in the body than the mind' (32); affectivity is 'closer to the core of our being' (58), and that 'humans are first and fundamentally affective creatures' (134).

¹⁵ Biblically we are told God (in whose image we are created) 'is love' (1 Jn. 4:8), that we are to love the Lord with all our heart (Dt. 6:5) and that we are not to love the world (1 Jn. 2:15).

¹⁶ Glanzer, 'Transforming Colleges and Universities', p. 391.

coinherence¹⁷ of affectivity and intellect. We may theoretically assign priority to affectivity, but in practice, we are always *in media res* – living within a social imaginary, depending on background understanding, but also routinely engaging with thought and ideas which form and inform what goes on in the affective realm: a constantly woven tapestry of human cognition, conscious and unconscious, intellectual and affective.¹⁸

In keeping with his prioritisation of affectivity, Smith asserts, ‘Before we articulate a worldview, we worship.’ (33) He states that members of the early church ‘were worshiping long before they got all their doctrines in order or articulated the elements of a Christian worldview... we can see in the New Testament itself the remnants of early Christian hymns (Phil. 2:5-11)... that likely were taken up from worship practices of the early church.’ (135) However, Richard Bauckham notes that the worldview of Second Temple Judaism (from which the early church emerged) was ‘self-consciously monotheistic’ and that the decisive expression of this belief was shown through worship: ‘God must be worshipped, no other being may be worshipped.’¹⁹ Bauckham argues that Jesus was worshipped because he was included ‘in the unique divine identity as Jewish monotheism understood it’.²⁰ Thus worldview, belief, worship practices and Christological reflection functioned in a dynamic, interactive relationship. In both *Desiring the Kingdom*²¹ and some of his other works,²²

¹⁷ Coinherence is defined as ‘the full and mutual sharing of one thing in the complete reality of the other’ by Timothy George and Alister McGrath in *For All the Saints: Evangelical Theology and Christian Spirituality* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), p. 3.

¹⁸ In an interview Smith eloquently underscores this reality as he comments on the long-term value of academic reflection for the enrichment of church practices: ‘For those of us who then feel this impulsion and engage in intellectual reflection for the sake of the Church, the ultimate goal and *telos* of our reflection is to have faithful practice...the virtue of reflection is that it is for the practice. It digs deep wells that you can drink from for a long, long time... What might sometimes look like arcane, arid academic learning might actually be teaching us disciplines that will become very important for pastoral ministry later. We need to resist the cultural demand that everything pays off right now. Scholarly reflection just doesn’t work that way.’ Smith interviewed by Caleb J. D. Maskell in ‘Desiring the Kingdom in a Postmodern World’, *Cutting Edge*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (Fall 2011), p. 14.

¹⁹ Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), p. 11.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

²¹ Smith notes Taylor’s understanding that “‘theory’ sometimes “trickles down” and “infiltrates” the social imaginary’ and that Heidegger had a ‘similar account of how theory can become “sedimented” into our understanding’ (69n56).

²² For example, Smith describes ‘the “trickle down” theory of culture’ as ‘the idea that, in important ways, current philosophical currents...have an impact on the shape of cultural practices’, (*The Devil Reads Derrida* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009], pp. 135-36.) Similarly he comments, ‘...I agree with [Francis] Schaeffer that cultural phenomena tend to be a product of philosophical movements. We take culture seriously by taking ideas seriously.’ (*Who’s Afraid of Postmodernism* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006], p. 20.) I was directed to Smith’s inconsistency regarding ‘the formative role of ideas and beliefs’ and the ‘trickle-down’ theory of culture by William L. Oliverio, [review of *Desiring the Kingdom*], *Pneuma* vol. 32 (2010), pp. 310-11. Smith discusses the relationship of scripture and confession and theoretical theological reflection, endorsing a view which ‘involves two things: first taking seriously the robustness of Christian confession that undergirds theoretical reflection on our being in the world, and

Smith acknowledges that ideas can play a seminal role in the formation of general culture and that the theoretical can help shape what subsequently functions as the pre-theoretical. Importantly, Smith acknowledges the role of careful reflection and intentionality in the development of worship practices: 'Reflection is especially important for those who are responsible for *leading* worship, so that the rhythms and practices of worship are *intentional*' (166n28, emphasis Smith's).

The need for discernment is another area where affectivity and intellect are interdependent. The adaptive unconscious is a powerful cognitive resource, but is not a reliable source of wisdom. Many of our intuitive biases mislead us.²³ Affectivity, by virtue of its power to form desire and action nonconsciously, unintentionally and automatically is the level at which deception, manipulation, propaganda and brainwashing function.²⁴ Smith acknowledges the need to balance affectivity with reflection, saying, '[cultural liturgies] affective power thrives on bypassing our critical discernment... This is why I obviously don't mean to suggest that we should refrain from thinking or give up our critical habits of mind' (209).

An argument from ethics can also be made for the cooperative role of cognition in cultivating practices. Smith generally supports a MacIntyrean view of practices²⁵ which, as mentioned above, sees practices as cooperative behaviour with standards of excellence that are systematically extended. So construed, practices can hardly function primarily in the nonconscious background. MacIntyre says, 'Human beings need to learn to understand themselves as practical reasoners about goods, about what on particular occasions it is good for them to do and about how it is best for them to live out their lives.'²⁶ As Campbell comments, such MacIntyrean practices are 'neither routine nor unconscious'.²⁷

second, taking seriously the degree of interaction between theology in its theoretical mode and the church's pre-theoretical confession.' (*Introduction to Radical Orthodoxy* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004], pp. 176-77.) Citing this discussion in *Desiring the Kingdom*, Smith says, 'I suggest that something similar happens in the case of Christian worship: the "fruit" of theological reflection (e.g., the Nicene Creed) trickles down and infiltrates the Christian social imaginary such that this now becomes absorbed as a kind of noncognitive "understanding"' (69n56).

²³ See David G. Meyers, *Intuition: Its Powers and Perils* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002).

²⁴ See Anthony Pratkanis and Eliot Aronson, *Age of Propaganda: The Everyday Use and Abuse of Persuasion* (New York: W. H. Freeman & Co, 2001) and William Sargant, *Battle for the Mind: A Physiology of Conversion and Brain-Washing* (Cambridge, MA: Malor Books; 1997).

²⁵ 'Practice Overload? A Response to Willimon', <http://www.faithandleadership.com/blog/03-25-2010/james-ka-smith-practice-overload-response-willimon>, accessed 26 December 2011.

²⁶ Alasdair MacIntyre, *Dependent, Rational Animals* (Chicago: Open Court, 1999), p. 67. Cf. *Desiring the Kingdom* (56n34).

²⁷ Campbell, *The Word Before the Powers*, p. 139.

Smith argues for affective primacy while including disclaimers about the intellect in a somewhat ad hoc fashion. The result is more a juxtaposition of affectivity and intellect than a holistic vision of human cognitive faculties.²⁸ Smith's argument emphasises the need for attention to affectivity in our anthropology but does not make explicit how to integrate affectivity and intellect in the resultant pedagogy. Smith's tendency to over-privilege affectivity is reflected in his treatment of the biblical concept of 'the heart'. I will address this in the final section of this analysis.

Smith's depiction of the heart (*kardia*)

The 'heart' (which Smith often describes with the New Testament Greek word, *kardia*) is a key concept in *Desiring the Kingdom*, presented as central to identity and personhood. Smith's affective anthropology locates the 'center of gravity' of human identity in the 'heart' (47, 57), describing it as 'the very nerve center of how we orient ourselves to the world' (96). The assertion that the 'heart' is central to personhood finds broad support in the Old and New Testaments. Thus the covenant community is called to love God 'with all [their] heart' (Dt. 6:5); God observes humankind to discover and aid 'those whose heart is completely His'; and he promises New Covenant transformation by writing his law 'on their hearts' (Jer. 31:33). The heart is 'the source of all behaviour' (Pro. 4:23)²⁹ and Jesus equates the heart with the inner life (Mark 7:19).

While Smith's focus on the centrality of the heart is apt, his characterisation is problematical. *Desiring the Kingdom* assumes functional equivalency between 'the heart' and affectivity as construed by Smith. Images and sensory experiences address us at the level of the 'imaginary more than the intellect', 'seep into our imagination' and are 'absorbed into our *kardia*' (96). Smith repeatedly characterises 'the heart' (*kardia*) as 'the gut' in comments like, 'What if we began by appreciating how education not only gets into our head but also (and more fundamentally) grabs us by the gut – what the New Testament refers to as *kardia*, "the heart"?' (18; see also 26, 47, 57, 63, 126, *inter alia*).

While biblical usage includes what Smith emphasises, it presents us with a more holistic understanding encompassing all human faculties, affective and cognitive. Searle, in her treatment of biblical imagination

²⁸ Smith acknowledges the difficulty of articulating these distinctions and says he plans to address this issue more rigorously in the second volume of his trilogy: 'I continue to find it difficult to come up with a lexicon that can address these distinctions in a neat and tidy way, particularly since the same terms can mean very different things in different disciplines. Wrestling with this challenge will be a core project of volume 2' (28n11).

²⁹ Bruce K. Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs, Chapters 1-15* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), p. 297.

argues the Greek word *kardia* shares the semantic range of the Hebrew *leb*, both meaning ‘heart’. Searle says of *leb*, ‘contrary to the predilection of modern scientific analysis, it insists on treating as a whole, aspects of human thinking and being that are often segregated. It denotes the inner person, mind, will, heart and understanding, inevitably encompassing what we now categorise as imagination.’³⁰ France, commenting on *kardia* in Mark 7:19 says, “‘Heart’ is the term most commonly used in biblical literature for the essential personality. Whereas in English ‘heart’ tends to connote emotion, in both Hebrew and Greek it conveys equally, and perhaps more strongly, the spiritual and intellectual processes, including the will.”³¹ Accordingly, Craigie, on the injunction that God’s commandments be ‘upon’ the covenant people’s ‘heart’, (Dt. 6:6) says, ‘the people were to think on them and meditate about them, so that obedience would not be a matter of formal legalism, but a response based upon understanding’.³² Waltke nicely captures the tension between affectivity and careful reflection in the heart’s function: ‘Paradoxically, the eye and ear are gates to the heart and shape it... but at the same time the heart decides what they will hear and see...’³³

Smith, in his effort to reorient our anthropology equates ‘the heart’ with affectivity. But this falls short of the holistic biblical usage of ‘the heart’ which integrates the affective and cognitive. As discussed above, affectivity is a powerful aspect of formation, but its relationship with conscious cognition is more properly one of coinherence than primacy. We are undeniably affective; we are also inescapably second-order creatures: we not only think, we reflect on how we think, as Smith does in *Desiring the Kingdom*. When we apply Smith’s axiom (‘every pedagogy presupposes an anthropology’) to the pedagogy implicit in the scriptures, we see both affectively rich practices and rituals *and* appeals to doctrinal correctness, reflection on and ethical reasoning from the scriptures, suggesting a biblical anthropology which is not preeminently affective.

Conclusion

The critical reading above of one key aspect of Smith’s project is not meant to take away from the watershed significance of *Desiring the Kingdom*. Smith’s call for a ‘pedagogy of desire’ has started fruitful discussions which will, in all likelihood, continue and deepen in the coming years.

³⁰ Alison Searle, *The Eyes of Your Heart: Literary and Theological Trajectories of Imagining Biblically* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2008), pp. 32-35.

³¹ Richard T. France, *The Gospel of Mark* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), p. 291.

³² Peter C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), p. 170.

³³ Waltke, *Proverbs, Chapters 1-15*, p. 92.

Whereas Smith's 'primary target' is Christian secondary education, he envisions 'some collateral impact' for *Desiring the Kingdom* (11). Smith's emphasis on Christian training as more about *formation* than *information* is as needed in churches as in Christian colleges. Further, Smith's project has vital relevance for the newly emerging church in areas like the Muslim world, where I serve. 'Exegeting' the *telos* and 'pedagogy of desire' embedded in the social imaginary and cultural liturgies of such societies will provide needed insight for the work of discipleship and church planting. In such contexts where there is a dearth of Christian resources, tradition, and exemplars, the importance of developing Christian practices that attend to the affective aspect of formation can hardly be overemphasised. The challenge is to develop a truly holistic Christian pedagogy that wisely integrates the realities, cognitive and affective, of human personhood.

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Towards a Baptist Sanctoral?¹

Andy Goodliff

Baptists generally do not have much time for saints.² Baptists have never produced a sanctoral cycle (a listing of feast days for the commemoration of saints), although some ecclesial traditions do acknowledge some Baptists within their sanctoral.³ We are not likely to find Baptist churches observing many feasts outside of Christmas and Easter and possibly Pentecost. Many Baptists would look on the practice of naming and remembering saints with suspicion – it's not part of our tradition. This is partly for the good and right reason that, following the New Testament, all Christians are 'saints'.⁴ Therefore, it may be considered strange that a number of recent Baptist theologians have begun to argue in positive ways for Baptists to give some attention to those in our story we might term saints, although with certain qualifications. This partly emerges from the wider interest in rooting Baptist life and thought in a more catholic direction.⁵ This short essay is a study of recent Baptist engagements with the communion of saints and an initial attempt to develop the basis of a Baptist approach to remembering and celebrating their saints.⁶

In *Listening to the Past*, Stephen R. Holmes argues for the importance and place of tradition in doing theology. The book seeks to 'combat' views that claim we only need the Bible.⁷ In this context, Holmes discusses the doctrine of the communion of saints. He suggests that there is a 'theological value in identifying certain people as exemplary practitioners of the Christian life'.⁸ For Holmes, saints are those that provide us with an

¹ The idea for this article was prompted by a series of comments in August 2011 on the possibility of a list of Baptist saints, initiated by the author in response to a post by Steven Harmon. See 'Creating a List of Baptist "Saints"', http://andygoodliff.typepad.com/my_weblog/2011/08/creating-a-list-of-baptist-saints.html. Accessed 15 Feb 2012.

² For example see Andrei Kravtsev, 'Saints' in John H.Y. Briggs (ed.), *A Dictionary of European Baptist Life and Thought* (SBHT Vol. 33; Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2009), pp. 445-446.

³ The Church of England observes a day for John Bunyan on 30 August. The Episcopal Church in the United States observes days for Martin Luther King Jr, on 4 April, Walter Rauschenbusch on 2 July and John Bunyan on 29 August.

⁴ See the greetings from Paul to the communities in Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon.

⁵ See especially Steve R. Harmon, *Towards Baptist Catholicity: Essays on Tradition and the Baptist Vision* (SBHT Vol. 27; Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2006) and also the work of John Colwell, Paul S. Fiddes, Curtis Freeman, Barry Harvey, Stephen R. Holmes, Elizabeth Newman and others.

⁶ It is not an attempt to create a list of saints, this may be the subject of a future article, but ultimately is a project that would need a wide range of voices.

⁷ Stephen R. Holmes, *Listening to the Past: The Place of Tradition in Theology* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2002), p.xi.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

‘expanded and enriched view of what it might mean to be Christlike’.⁹ Holmes identifies that every Christian tradition has its own formal or informal hagiography¹⁰ – so even as Baptists we might already recognise the names, for example, of Helwys, Smyth, Bunyan, Carey, Fuller, Spurgeon, Oncken and Luther King, as those whose lives we give significance to, although it is perhaps true to say it is not the holiness of their lives, but rather their achievements – the beginning of the Baptist movement, the founding of the Baptist Missionary Society, their excellence as a preacher or contribution to social change.¹¹

Steven Harmon argues for a retrieval of worship patterns and practices from patristic Christianity for the theological health of Baptists.¹² Harmon argues that Baptists should pay more attention to the church calendar, the use of a lectionary, a weekly celebration of the Lord’s Supper, the reciting of the creeds, the use of the collect form of prayer, the practice of confession and pardon, sharing the peace, singing hymns (especially those with words from the patristic era) and celebrating the lives of the saints. Harmon points to the development of a ‘sanctoral’ by the patristic church which, in its beginnings, was a list of martyrs, but over time included ascetics, virgins, bishops, and other exemplary saints.¹³ Harmon suggests that ‘Baptist historians should propose additional exemplary Christians from the Baptist tradition’ and so create a sanctoral that is ‘both distinctively Baptist and broadly ecumenical’.¹⁴ He proposes that Baptist congregations make space in their weekly worship to briefly tell these stories of men and women. He refers here to some similar ideas from the Baptist theologian James Wm. McClendon, Jr.

In an appendix to his study *Biography as Theology*, McClendon makes some comments with regard to the inclusion of saints in worship. McClendon believes that ‘attention to the saints may direct, enhance, and encourage worship of God’.¹⁵ He makes three points. Firstly, that ‘saints are *all* God’s children’,¹⁶ following the use of saints in the Pauline letters to

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 28.

¹¹ Outside of John Bunyan, Baptists have perhaps not produced many *recognised* spiritual giants. This may well reflect the strong strain of evangelicalism in our identity, which tends towards activism rather than contemplation, and also due to a narrow definition of Christian spirituality; attention to a more particular *Baptist* spirituality might generate a different account of spiritual holiness. See Paul Fiddes (ed.), *Under the Rule of Christ: Dimensions of Baptist Spirituality* (Regent’s Study Guides 14; Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2008) for one attempt at describing the shape of Baptist spirituality.

¹² Harmon, *Towards Baptist Catholicity*, p. 152.

¹³ Ibid., p. 170.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ James Wm. McClendon, Jr., *Biography as Theology: How Life Stories Can Remake Today’s Theology* (2nd Ed., Philadelphia, PA: Trinity Press, 1990 [1974]), p.173.

¹⁶ Ibid., p.178.

refer to all Christians. This means we should be careful to create a hierarchy that goes against the ‘commonality of saints’. While there are better and worse saints, there is no non-saint in the church. Secondly, the lives of others can ‘serve as encouragement and guidance for others’ and so we should make space for the telling of particular lives.¹⁷ McClendon suggests the biographical sermon as one possibility. He also puts forward the possibility that a church can choose a life to study and explore in a variety of ways over a given period of time. This may produce conflict – which lives might be chosen – but this McClendon sees positively as it is to ask about the character of Christ.¹⁸ McClendon does not shy away from claiming that is a veneration, or honouring, of saints, but only in the sense that contributes to our worship of God: the saint’s life is a gift of God’s grace.¹⁹ McClendon’s third point is to question whether we pray to the saints. He says ‘nothing must rival prayer to God’, but if prayer to saints can ‘encourage and enhance true worship’ then this is to the good,²⁰ although he thinks a word other than ‘prayer’ is more appropriate.

In his little book *The Rhythm of Doctrine*, which is a study in Christian doctrine shaped around the Christian year, John E. Colwell begins his chapter centred on All Saints’ Day²¹ by acknowledging that the day is rarely celebrated amongst Baptists.²² However, like Holmes, Colwell argues that Baptists and Evangelicals practice a version of informal hagiography. He makes the point that ‘we need our spiritual heroes; we need our spiritual examples; we need those who encourage us in the hope that a consistent discipleship is possible’.²³ Colwell believes it is important that with any life we give attention to ‘their weaknesses and struggles as much as their effectiveness and courage’.²⁴ Having used the language of ‘heroes’, Colwell reverts back to ‘saints’ as a more appropriate word, because it is not that a life is ‘heroic’, but that it is ‘faithful’.²⁵ Colwell goes on to argue that we are connected beyond time and space to all ‘who participate in the Son by the Spirit’,²⁶ and therefore, by being joined to Christ, we are also joined to the communion of saints. In prayer and in the

¹⁷ Ibid., p.179.

¹⁸ Ibid., p.180.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp.180-181.

²⁰ Ibid., p.183.

²¹ The chapter is titled ‘The One Who Invites Us Into Communion’.

²² John E. Colwell, *The Rhythm of Doctrine: A Liturgical Sketch of Christian Faith and Faithfulness* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2007), p.107.

²³ Ibid., p.108.

²⁴ Ibid., pp.108-109.

²⁵ Ibid., p.109. For a separate and helpful development of the difference between hero and saint, see Samuel Wells, ‘The Disarming Virtue of Stanley Hauerwas’, *Scottish Journal of Theology* 52.1 (1999), pp. 82-8.

²⁶ Colwell, *The Rhythm of Doctrine*, p. 112.

Eucharist we are never alone but ‘surrounded by a “great cloud of witnesses”’.²⁷

A final positive affirmation of the communion of the saints can be found in *On Being the Church*, written by Brian Haymes, Ruth Gouldbourne and Anthony R. Cross. They claim that the ‘neglect of the saints, for whatever reasons, has not been a wholly good thing’.²⁸ A new look at the doctrine would serve to help Baptist congregations learn how to live in response to the gospel, remind them that the church is greater than any local congregation and see them as gifts of God to help us on the journey of faith.²⁹ Haymes *et al* suggest that these saints may be those which the wider church has named as exemplars, there will also be those known only to a local congregation, and there are Baptists ‘whom it would be wise not to forget, such as Thomas Helwys, Dorothy Hazzard, William Carey, William Knibb, Marianne Farningham, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, Martin Luther King, Jr’.³⁰

Beyond this set of reflections, more recently in response to an online conversation, Stephen Holmes, has furthered his arguments in favour of a sanctoral cycle, but argues that a Baptist list would possibly be quite distinctive in comparison to other traditions. Holmes writes that:

A formal sanctoral cycle would open our eyes beyond the small number of favourite stories we happen to have fallen across, and invite us to confront riches and traditions from other parts of the world, and other periods in history. It would force us to face up to patterns of sanctity that are foreign to our own, asking anabaptists to respect those who worked with and in political structures to further the cause of Christ, and asking the comfortably Reformed to imagine the holiness of countercultural existence.³¹

A distinctively Baptist sanctoral cycle, Holmes wonders, would differ from other lists in not wanting to automatically reward those in privileged and ecclesial office. It may well want to exclude those ‘whose claim to sanctity relies on having deployed violence or oppression in the name of Christ’. Furthermore he suggests, in a similar way to Haymes *et al*, that a ‘properly Baptist sanctoral cycle’ would want to give attention to the *local* church, and the lives there that helped display faithful Christian

²⁷ Ibid., p. 113.

²⁸ Brian Haymes, Ruth Gouldbourne and Anthony R. Cross, *On Being the Church: Revisioning Baptist Identity* (SBHT Vol. 21; Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008), p. 43.

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 44-45.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 45.

³¹ Stephen R. Holmes, ‘A Baptist Sanctoral Cycle?’ <http://shoredfragments.wordpress.com/2011/08/15/a-baptist-sanctoral-cycle/>. Accessed 15 Feb 2012.

existence. His final comment goes a stage further and says a Baptist sanctoral cycle would favour the ‘memory of communities more than individuals’ and so the ‘Church Anniversary’, observed in many Baptist churches, is the proper Baptist celebration of the saints.

Having considered the work of Holmes, Harmon, McClendon, Colwell and Haymes *et al*, it is my contention that there is some clear merit to develop a practice of Baptist congregations remembering with thankfulness and learning with openness from the lives of those that have gone before and now number among the saints with God.

1. A sanctoral cycle would serve to help tell the Baptist story, both in its broadest sense – its leaders and theologians from across the world,³² and in a more local sense – the story of this particular Baptist congregation. Here the church anniversary would go beyond just an opportunity to invite a visiting preacher,³³ but give attention, on an annual basis, to remembering and celebrating the faithfulness of God through particular lives. The church anniversary becomes a kind of feast day. Beyond this, it would foster a sense of this local congregation being part of the universal church in terms of time and space.³⁴
2. Related to point 1 above, we must ask whose Baptist story are we telling? The danger is that a sanctoral cycle may sanction a version of the Baptist story which overlooks or marginalises particular lives and/or communities. Sam Wells suggests we thus need to pay attention to the ‘hidden transcript’, which is the story that is often obscured by the ‘public transcript’.³⁵ The Baptist story itself may well be a ‘hidden transcript’ which is often a footnote in many narratives of church history, and the creation of a sanctoral may be a means of reminding the wider church of our history and witness. An example of the hidden transcript in our story is the contribution of women,³⁶ who often remain footnotes to the likes of Smyth, Helwys, Carey and others. Paul Fiddes notes that ‘in England we surely also need to recover the hidden stories of women in our churches’ and he suggests the example of the poet and

³² This would need to seek to avoid being overly anglophile and male. So any list would need to ensure recognition of Baptists outside of just the UK and North America.

³³ This is a common practice in many British Baptist churches.

³⁴ The danger for any congregation is to believe there was no church before they joined and, for Baptists particularly, no church beyond their local expression.

³⁵ Samuel Wells, *Improvisation: The Drama of Christian Ethics* (London: SPCK, 2004), pp. 98-99. Wells is drawing on the work of James C. Scott, *Domination and the Art of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (Yale University Press, 1990).

³⁶ In a number of essays and articles, Karen Smith has helpfully retrieved some of these stories: <http://baptisthistoryandthought.wordpress.com/2009/09/09/karen-e-smith/>. Accessed 15 Feb 2012. See also Curtis Freeman (ed.), *A Company of Women Preachers: Baptist Prophetesses in Seventeenth-Century England. A Reader* (Baylor, 2011).

hymn-writer Anne Steele.³⁷ It may be that the story of Baptists in Europe is also a hidden one, although this is being helpfully rectified through the work of the International Baptist Theological Seminary.³⁸

3. A sanctoral cycle would invite Baptists to hear and see the myriad ways of following Christ faithfully and so provide encouragement and example. As Ben Myers writes in his book on the theology of Rowan Williams, ‘saints show sanctity is possible; they prove that it is possible to live before God and to live before others in light of God’.³⁹ The saints show us that sanctification is not an optional extra, but the consequence and outworking of our being saved.⁴⁰ Again a Baptist sanctoral cycle would include lives that capture a wider respect and imagination and ones that were more particular and known only to a local congregation.
4. A sanctoral cycle would remind us that the gospels are not just to be read, but lived, and as such ‘our interpretations of the gospels are not finished until we put the texts into practice as well’.⁴¹ The naming of saints is to name those that give life to discipleship through their ‘performance’ of scripture.⁴² The lives of particular saints are reminders of how being a Christian disciple affects the head, the heart and the hand.
5. A Baptist sanctoral cycle would be one that required the skills of stewardship, interrogation and invention.⁴³ Mark S. Medley describes ‘stewardship’ as ‘receiving the tradition with charity and cherishing its wisdom’.⁴⁴ Stewardship of a sanctoral is a means of hearing and caring for our story and seeking in particular lives within it ways that God’s grace is embodied for our edification and to God’s glory. Medley argues

³⁷ Paul S. Fiddes, *Tracks and Traces* (SBHT Vol. 13; Carlisle: Paternoster, 2003), p. 11. For more on Anne Steele see Cynthia Y. Aalders, *To Express the Ineffable: The Hymns and Spirituality of Anne Steele* (SBHT Vol. 40; Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008).

³⁸ A good place to start is Ian Randall, *Communities of Conviction: Baptist Beginnings in Europe* (Neufeld Verlag, 2009).

³⁹ Benjamin Myers, *Christ the Stranger: The theology of Rowan Williams* (London: T & T Clark, 2012), p. 75.

⁴⁰ See John E. Colwell, *Living the Christian Story* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2001).

⁴¹ David Matzko McCarthy, ‘The Gospels Embodied: Lives of Saints and Martyrs’ in Stephen C. Barton (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Gospels* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 242. For a related suggestion from amongst Anabaptist and early Baptist communities, see the remarks of Ian Randall, ‘Tracing Baptist Theological Footprints: A European Perspective’, *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 36.2 (Summer 2009), pp. 136-139.

⁴² The concept of performance in relation to scripture has been developed by Frances Young, Nicholas Lash, Walter Brueggemann, Kevin Vanhoozer, Stephen Barton. See Wells, *Improvisation*, ch.4 for a summary and Wells own development with relation to the practice of ‘improvisation’.

⁴³ These are borrowed from Mark S. Medley, ‘Stewards, Interrogators, and Inventors: Toward a Practice of Tradition’ in Roger A. Ward and Philip E. Thompson (eds.), *Tradition and the Baptist Academy* (SBHT Vol. 31; Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2011), pp. 67-89.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

that an engagement with tradition ‘continues to invite new understanding. They stimulate new questions. They are openly contestable.’⁴⁵ The saints continue to speak to us; they are voices that challenge and inspire. The skill of ‘interrogation’ is to bring the lives of saints ‘under reflective scrutiny.’⁴⁶ McClendon argues that ‘iconography is not biography’,⁴⁷ by which he means, we are looking for an honest account and not one that seeks to overlook or hide the less savoury aspects of a particular life: ‘the more we know of their lives, of their weaknesses and struggles as much as of their effectiveness and courage, the more poignant and powerful the example’.⁴⁸ The skill of ‘invention’ is necessary if we are to avoid thinking that the life of a particular saint is to be slavishly copied. A Baptist sanctoral that sought to celebrate, and learn from, the lives of saints, must recognise that discipleship is not a matter of copying Jesus or the life of a saint, but seeking to discover from them the manner in which a faithful life can be lived in the present. Any engagement with the life of a saint in the past to inform and shape discipleship in the present will be, by default, a ‘creative constructive effort’.⁴⁹ At the end of his essay Medley gathers the skills of stewardship, interrogation and invention under the idea of improvisation.⁵⁰ A Baptist sanctoral would seek to be an aid for congregations to improvise faithful living in response to the gospel story. Saints thus become part of ‘God’s good company’⁵¹ who offer limitless examples of how to be disciples.

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⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 84.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 86.

⁴⁷ McClendon, Jr., *Biography as Theology*, p. 178.

⁴⁸ Colwell, *The Rhythm of Doctrine*, pp. 108-109.

⁴⁹ Medley, ‘Stewards, Interrogators, and Inventors’, p. 87.

⁵⁰ A description of the practice of ‘improvisation’ can be found in Wells, *Improvisation*.

⁵¹ I borrow the language of ‘God’s good company’ from the title of David Matzko McCarthy’s *Sharing God’s Good Company: A Theology of the Communion of Saints* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012).

Degeneration of Primary Theology: The Case of Eschatology*

András Szirtes

‘It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses...’ (Acts 1:7-8)

Introduction

How can Baptist teaching in eschatology be characterised? Even if only a small number of church members know the word ‘dispensationalism’, talks and bookshop offers convince us that among the many topics this one would win. Dispensationalist questions and answers dominate present-day Baptist and evangelical thinking in Hungary, and perhaps also in other parts of Europe.¹ Why? Is this the only way?

McClendon argues that over the centuries Baptist theology has too often followed a way that was not its own: others’ questions and answers made us overlook characteristics of a genuine Baptist theology. We were too engaged in debates on perseverance, inerrancy, etc;² and we can add classic dispensational topics: millennium, rapture, and tribulation. So, we can ask, is there a Baptist way of teaching eschatology?

The main thesis of this article is that dispensational eschatology does not offer an adequate biblical way of thinking and reasoning for our churches. Many Christians in Central and Eastern Europe lived through the difficult times of the past, yet they verbalised their teaching in a language foreign to their eschatological experiences. This fact assures us that the dynamics of primary and secondary theologies in the case of eschatology is worth considering. We are arguing that a New Testament based eschatology is not a speculative system of certain future events, but it has a strong relationship with everything we do as Christians. It also means that

* Lecture held at a Conference on ‘The Dynamics of Primary and Secondary Theologies in Baptist Communities’ at IBTS, Prague, 24-28 August 2004. Revised text including some remarks of the participants.

¹ John Dey convincingly argues for shaping a believer’s church eschatology, and suggests different ways to do it. Writing in an American context he emphasises that the deconstructive and constructive tasks of sermons are to be done simultaneously, and warns ‘not to underestimate the degree to which your congregation has been influenced by dispensational premillennialism’. J. Dey, ‘Armageddon Anxiety’, in Loren L. Johns (ed.), *Apocalypticism and Millennialism, Shaping a Believers Church Eschatology for the Twenty-First Century* (Kitchener, Ontario: Pandora Press, 2000), p. 389.

² James W. McClendon, Jr, *Ethics. Systematic Theology Vol 1* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1986), pp. 25ff.

moral issues cannot be hung upon eschatology secondarily, but are genuine parts of it.

Primary and secondary theologies

We are going to clarify the different theological levels and their relation to each other in eschatology making use of Barth's definition of theology. As he unfolds in the very first pages of his *Church Dogmatics*, theology as 'speaking about God' has three forms:

1. acts of each believer: theology of faith and life;
2. acts of the community: theology of worship (preaching, sacraments, prayer, mission, caritas);
3. scientific theology: control and guidance of 1 and 2.

The third form is needed because theology is always a human speech about God, and therefore is not infallible. Doing this form of theology the church asks herself about the correctness of her 'theology' and gives guidance; it is the church's self-examination.

...by her very confession of God, the Church also confesses to the humanity and likewise to the responsibility of her action. She is aware of her exposure to fierce temptation in speaking of God, aware also that she has to reckon with God for her speaking. The first, last, and decisive answer to this double compulsion consists in the fact that she finds His grace sufficient, whose strength is mighty in the weak. Yet in virtue of her very contentment with that, she recognises and undertakes, as an active Church, a further human task, the task of criticising and revising her language about God.³

Some remarks are appropriate. First, for our present purposes it seems better to take 1 and 2 together as primary, and 3 as secondary theologies. Second, it is clear from the above that 'speech' is used here metaphorically, i.e. as the manifold reflection of God's revelation in us and among us. Theology is not only words, but also being, thinking, acting and speaking. The very task of secondary theologies is to unfold the hidden motives, attitudes and traditions in our every-day theologies and to put them on the scales. And finally, Barth considers scientific theology as a function of the church, yet perhaps not of the local community. We are convinced that the place of a second-level self-reflective study of primary theologies is not only in the academic world, but first of all in the local church itself. This Baptist distinctive should be emphasised, but not at the price of abandoning academic theology.

³ K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1936), pp. 3ff.

Distinctions of folk and academic theology are also in use. According to Humphreys folk theology is what a community holds and lives by, while academic theology is held by people whose social place is primarily in an intellectual elite. Folk theology is highly internalised, but not necessarily articulated, and uses a first-order language of prayer, worship and mission, while academic theology is highly articulated, but not necessarily internalised and uses a second-order language.⁴ This definition concentrates on the social setting of theologising and sees the two levels contrary to each other, while that of Barth prefers a functional approach, and thus says more about the relationship of the two levels. In the following we use the terms primary and secondary theologies, but not restricting the latter to academic places.

Dispensationalism

As secondary level theological study of present-day eschatology of Baptist churches we give an outline of dispensationalism and question it critically. We are aware that the eschatological views of our churches are more complex than just categorising them all as dispensationalism, yet this category gives us a setting appropriate for outlining the main tenets of our eschatology. When raising questions we are going to prefer hermeneutical ones and those related to the function of eschatology. As McClendon points out, doctrine in the sense of NT *didache* is not only a set of beliefs, but also a teaching practice.⁵ It means that we can speak about the context, appropriateness and fruits of an eschatological teaching.⁶

The birth of dispensationalism goes back to the nineteenth century and can be understood at least partly as a response to optimistic postmillennial views. The genesis of these latter are usually ascribed to Thomas Brightman (1562–1607) and Daniel Whitby (1683–1721), who taught that Christ's return would be preceded by a prosperous time when the gospel would spread rapidly, bringing the millennium before Christ's second coming.⁷ It was a non-apocalyptic⁸ eschatology, which can be

⁴ Fisher Humphreys, *Baptists and Their Theology* (Baptist History and Heritage, 2000), pp. 7–19.

⁵ James W. McClendon, Jr, *Doctrine. Systematic Theology Vol 11* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994), pp. 28ff.

⁶ In this sense Grenz prefers speaking of 'the deeper issue of millennialism' to the pure exegetical questions. All three millennial views have their appropriate outlook toward history, namely, postmillennialism is optimistic, premillennialism is pessimistic, and amillennialism is realistic. Stanley Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1994), pp. 803ff.

⁷ R. Bauckham, 'Millennium' in S.B. Ferguson and D.F. Wright (eds.) *New Dictionary of Theology* (Leicester: IVP, 1988), pp. 428–430, George Ladd, *The Blessed Hope. A Biblical Study of the Second Advent and The Rapture* (Grand Rapids, Mi: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956), pp. 32ff.

⁸ According to recent studies, the term 'apocalyptic' cannot be taken synonymous with 'eschatology'. Apocalyptic eschatology has its own features, which are not necessarily shared by all eschatological teaching. C.f. R. Bauckham, 'Apocalyptic' in *New Dictionary of Theology*, pp. 33–35.

traced, e.g. in the well-known Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible (1662-1714)⁹, and which also influenced Jonathan Edwards. However, the connection between postmillennialism and the Great Revival is better understood as mutual: in missionary enterprises and agencies many saw the very tools bringing in the new era. The greatest deficiency of this theology was that it made Christ's Second Coming almost irrelevant. According to Ladd, this fact explains the change of thinking about eschatology in evangelical circles that came about in the second half of the nineteenth century through the work of J. N. Darby (1800-1882), leader of the Plymouth Brethren, and others. The new theology, dispensationalism, 'revived the doctrine of the Second Advent of Christ and made it a meaningful truth in the churches',¹⁰ but it also developed a whole system of understanding Christian eschatology. It has been spread through conferences and especially through the Scofield Reference Bible (1909). As postmillennialism, through the doctrine of progress, gave way to liberalism identifying the Kingdom of God with morality and social justice, dispensational theologians together with others wanted to be absolutely loyal to scripture in claiming its inerrancy and literal interpretation. Hence biblical inerrancy and the dispensational schema of end times have become the distinguishing marks of fundamentalism.¹¹ Moreover, the spiritual climate of the late nineteenth century made Evangelicals feel themselves aliens in modern society, and this also contributed to the rise of the new eschatology: 'While evangelicalism was culturally dominant, postmillennialism triumphed; when Evangelical influence waned, "it became the relic of a lost world".'¹² This observation confirms that eschatological beliefs are strongly connected to cultural changes, and therefore a functional approach is in place.

Albeit dispensational theology has undergone changes and has its variations, its characteristic features have not altered so much since its beginnings. The name is a bit misleading because thinking in dispensations (from Latin *dispensatio* meaning distributing, ordering, managing translating the Greek *oikonomia*) is characteristic also of other theologies.

Question: is it necessary to think in dispensations whatever, or, more exactly, to move beyond speaking of the Old and New Covenants?

⁹ Matthew Henry Commentary on the Whole Bible (six volumes), <http://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete>, accessed 8 April 2013.

¹⁰ George Ladd, *Revival of Apocalyptic in the Churches*, RevExp 72(1975), pp 268.

¹¹ William V. Trollinger, Jr, 'How John Nelson Darby Went Visiting', in Loren, *Apocalypticism and Millennialism*, pp. 264f.

¹² H. Peskett, 'Missions and Eschatology', in Kent Brower and Mark Elliot (eds.), *Eschatology in Bible and Theology. Evangelical Essays at the Dawn of a New Millennium* (Downers Grove, Ill: IVP, 1997), p. 310.

Scholars usually regard the following tenets of dispensationalism as key ones:¹³

- God has two people, Israel and the Church. His promises given in the Old Testament to Israel will be literally fulfilled, at least in the millennium, hence the church is not their successor or at least only in a restricted way. The church is often viewed as a parenthesis in God's work. This distinction between Israel and the Church is strongly connected with special views about the interpretation of scripture.

*Questions: Are there any hidden motives in claiming Israel's special role? I mean, is it not a type of pro-Semitism that wants to balance the manifold anti-Semitism of Christian centuries? Is this the only way of 'apologising'?*¹⁴

- A literal hermeneutics and a concordant view of biblical language. Different expressions always mean or denote different things, e.g. the 'day of the Lord' and 'the day of Christ', 'resurrection from the dead' and 'of the dead',¹⁵ 'Israel' and 'church' cannot refer to the same. The latter distinction between Israel and the church is expressed in the hermeneutical rule of 'rightly dividing the Word' (cf. 2 Tim 2). It says that we have to decide *a priori* which passages deal with Israel and which with the church, and then apply this in interpretation of the text.¹⁶ Further, dispensationalism prefers apocalyptic texts of the Bible and regards them as bringing extra information on the 'last days'.

Questions: What reading of apocalyptic texts is appropriate, and how much should our eschatology be based on these? There are texts with 'simple' eschatological statements and hints, and there are more elaborate eschatologies: what motives can be recognised behind them, and how does it inform us on studying and teaching eschatology?

- A pessimistic view of the world: real change can be awaited only by Christ's return. While postmillennialism was (is) optimistic, dispensationalism (and other premillennial views) is popular mostly among people who are pessimistic about the current situation. It makes

¹³ Bauckham, 'Millennium' in *New Dictionary of Theology*, pp. 428-430, H. Rowdon, 'Dispensational Theology' in *New Dictionary of Theology*, pp. 200-201, Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1965) pp. 38-40, Michael J. Vlach, *What is Dispensationalism?* at www.theologicalstudies.org/dispens.html, accessed 8 April 2013.

¹⁴ I think this motive could lead also J. Moltmann in his *The Coming of God. Christian Eschatology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996) to the claim that eschatology is necessarily millenarian. He sees the purpose of a millennium in fulfilment of the hope for Israel. 'It is only the millenarian hope in Christian eschatology which unfolds an earthly and historical future for the church and Israel.' Moltmann, *ibid.*, p. 197.

¹⁵ Even Moltmann uses this distinction in his arguments for millennium (*The Coming of God*, p. 151.). A simple study in the use of the relevant expressions in the Greek NT proves that it is a linguistic nonsense.

¹⁶ Ladd, *The Blessed Hope*, p. 130.

clear why dispensationalism is accepted by many. In an age of nuclear, ecological and humanitarian catastrophes it offers an easy way of understanding the events; this is especially true among the disappointed people of Central and Eastern Europe. But precisely because of this connection, often the events and reports themselves justify the theory and not the scripture. Moreover, this wholly futurist view of eschatology easily misses the fact that the *eschaton* has broken into our world, the kingdom of God has been inaugurated.

Questions: How much may our optimistic or pessimistic view of the present be mirrored in our eschatology? Is there not a danger here that, dogmatising our attitude to this world, the transforming power of eschatology (I am sure it has one) loses its role?

- Pessimism leads to neglect of (social) ethics.¹⁷ In the late 1940s Carl F. Henry¹⁸ warned that evangelicalism had lost its vitality and given up its social activity. Not only pessimism but also the preoccupation of intricacies of the future had led to neglect of mission for the present. According to Peskett, since then ‘a shift to this-worldly concerns’ has taken place in evangelical circles, and the earlier interest in eschatological details has declined, at least outside North America.¹⁹

Questions: Does dispensational theology involve similar consequences in Central and Eastern Europe? Supposing that the greatest number of missionaries to this part of Europe arrive from North America, what kind of eschatology do they teach us? Can there be an eschatological reasoning given to Christian social ethics based on biblical grounds and, if yes, how do we avoid postmillennial pitfalls? Can there be Christian eschatology without ethics?

- Teaching the ‘secret rapture’ of the church and pretribulationism, and thus two future comings of Christ. This is a rather speculative theory, which enables its proponents to draw a timeline from different Bible passages. Pretribulationism or ‘raptureism’ is an ‘escape-theology’,²⁰ a cheap comfort that goes hand in hand with pessimism and neglect of ethics.²¹

¹⁷ Pessimism and social disengagement were already related in the mid-1800s. A Brethren leader wrote: ‘(Factory children) must suffer and die. The foundations of everything are out of course and no man can rectify them. But we wait for God’s Son from heaven.’ (Quotation from Peskett, ‘Missions and Eschatology’, in Brower et al., *Eschatology in Bible and Theology*, p. 310. n31.)

¹⁸ ‘The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism’, cf. S. Grenz, *Renewing the Center. Evangelical Theology in a Post-Theological Era* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2000), pp. 86ff., Peskett, ‘Missions and Eschatology’, pp. 317ff.

¹⁹ Peskett, ‘Missions and Eschatology’, pp. 318ff.

²⁰ Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 153.

²¹ For a detailed study and refusal see Ladd, *Blessed Hope*, pp. 61-104.

Questions: Is there any possible way of making eschatological timetables? What is the purpose of NT texts enumerating end-time events and how can they be related to each other? Are millennium, rapture and tribulation really the most important categories of NT eschatology, and what is their proper place?

- Emphasis on the eschatological role of national Israel. Due to this, dispensationalism is able to explain actual political events (especially of the Near East) quite easily and seems to be a relevant, strong and popular theology. ‘Christians have felt that the only alternative to a pretribulation position (and we may add: to this whole view) was a liberal doctrine which discounts the hope of Christ’s Second Coming.’²² Furthermore in the USA this tenet is especially linked with a political redeemer myth.²³

Questions: People in our churches want to understand the things happening around them. How far can this desire be satisfied in a biblical way? What kind of hints does e.g. the Book of Revelation give in this respect? How do we avoid importing political attitudes as an ally of the USA and a NATO member?

- In its theological method dispensationalism builds on Bible texts as facts and arrives at its assertions by induction. This is a wholly modern, foundationalist²⁴ and rationalist methodology, similar to that of the natural sciences of the 1800s.²⁵ Hence it is understandable why dispensationalism needs the doctrine of inerrancy: to strengthen the base of the ‘building’. As Grenz writes, ‘with such a firm foundation in place, conservative theologians were confident of their ability to complete the task of deducing from scripture the great, timeless theological truths about God and the world that divine revelation had placed within its pages’.²⁶ Postmillennialism and liberalism, with their optimistic world-view, and cultural engagement and premillennialism with their pessimistic anti-modern attitude, were both children of the Enlightenment, though heavily opposing each other. This justifies Murphy’s thesis in the case of eschatology, namely that Enlightenment

²² Ibid., p. 137.

²³ Cf. the detailed analysis in Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, pp. 168-178.

²⁴ According to Murphy’s categories, foundationalism holds: (1) ‘knowledge systems must include a class of beliefs that are somehow immune from challenge’, (2) ‘all reasoning within the system proceeds in one direction only – from that set of special, indubitable beliefs to others, but not the reverse’. Nancey Murphy, *Beyond Liberalism and Fundamentalism. How Modern and Postmodern Philosophy Set the Theological Agenda* (Harrisburg, Pa: Trinity Press International, 1996), p. 13.

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 15ff., Stanley J. Grenz and John R. Franke, *Beyond Foundationalism. Shaping Theology in a Postmodern Context* (Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), pp. 28ff.

²⁶ Grenz et al, *Beyond Foundationalism*, p.35.

philosophy set and limited the options for theological reasoning.²⁷ Perhaps this kind of theologising was suitable at that time, but in the last decades post-modern critics of the Enlightenment and its philosophical theories have made modernist theology dubious and unacceptable for many. Alternative, nonfoundationalist theological methods are being proposed.

Question: How should we formulate Christian eschatology in a post-modern context?

I am aware that all these questions cannot be answered within the limits of the present paper, but I am sure that they can help us revise our eschatology, both as primary and secondary theology. What follows, is a proposal for another way of theologising/eschatologising for the benefit of our communities.

What is Eschatology about?

Usually eschatology is held to be concerned with the ‘last things’²⁸, i.e. events that are before us in the near or distant future: end times, Christ’s parousia, death, last judgement, new creation etc. This view is often further narrowed down to a study of final events of history and/or delineating a timetable. Yet there are a number of other approaches. Even etymology offers other solutions: eschatology can be about the *eschaton* (Sauter²⁹) not about *ta eschata* (last things), or about *adventus* (Moltmann³⁰) not *futurum*. These options are common in emphasising not so much the questions of when and what (will happen), but who (is coming). ‘The heart of eschatology is not when or what but who, not a schedule or a plan but a person. The Gospels move us to contemplate the future not by giving us a blueprint but by relating all to Jesus, Messiah and Son of man’.³¹ He is the last (Rev 22:13).³² We summarise our view as follows:

1. *Eschatology is theology*, I mean, it is first of all about God and not certain events. It witnesses to a God who wants to bring his creation to perfection, who ‘makes all things new’ (Rev 21:5), the God of the new creation. This means eschatology presupposes creation and sin, and this aspect of God’s work can be traced through the whole of history.

²⁷ Murphy, *Beyond Liberalism and Fundamentalism*, p. 35.

²⁸ The Greek *eschatos* means last or ending (epoch, event).

²⁹ Gerhard Sauter, *Eschatological Rationality: Theological Issues in Focus* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), pp. 146ff.

³⁰ Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, pp. 25ff.

³¹ D. Allison, ‘Eschatology’ in J.B. Green, S. McKnight and I.H. Marshall (eds.), *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* (Downers Grove, Ill: IVP, 1992), p. 209.

³² Adrio König, *The Eclipse of Christ in Eschatology. Toward a Christ-Centered Approach* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1989), pp. 23ff.

‘Eschatology is not merely the listing of what comes last in the temporal time line; instead, it is the explication of the meaning of the entire narrative of God at work throughout the ages.’³³ We may add: this meaning is revealed in Jesus Christ (Rev 5), hence the christological directedness of eschatology. As George Beasley-Murray puts this: ‘New Testament eschatology is marked off from all other eschatological thought precisely by its christocentric emphasis.’³⁴ So, if our eschatology shrinks back to a religious futurism of any kind, it no longer deserves to be Christian.

2. *There is no theology without eschatology.* ‘If Christianity be not altogether thoroughgoing eschatology, there remains in it no relationship whatever with Christ.’³⁵ This assertion of Barth has been justified by twentieth century scholarship, though it has been variously interpreted. Because of speculative and over-emphasised conceptions, some may be afraid of a ‘thoroughgoing eschatology’, but also a study of primary eschatologies (see below) confirms it. Thomas regards eschatology as about ‘ultimate reality’ (instead of the last things), and this gives us further insights. There are two types of eschatological thinking: i) temporal/horizontal, in which the present age and the age to come are confronted; ii) spatial/vertical, in which earthly and heavenly realities are confronted. These two are linked to each other, because ‘ultimate reality is not just what will transpire at the end of time, but that which has always existed in the heavenlies and which God apparently has always sought to make a present reality’.³⁶ This approach to eschatology underlines its importance in theology and also hints at its ethical dimension.
3. *Eschatology is not only about the future,* but the past and present, because the new creation is rooted in the Christ event and is actualised by the Holy Spirit in the present. As scholarly theology of the twentieth century has proven, we need a balanced view of the different time aspects of eschatology not limiting ourselves to a futurist or realised eschatology exclusively. The ‘already and not yet’ scheme has become generally accepted in eschatology. But we can profit even from one-sided approaches. For instance, realised eschatology (Bultmann, Dodd) rightly pointed out the eschatological nature not only of the Christ event, but also of the Christian existence. Recently, Beale argued for a comprehensive concept of eschatology, which seems quite useful. He

³³ Grenz, *Beyond Foundationalism*, pp. 258ff.

³⁴ G. Beasley-Murray, ‘New Testament Apocalyptic – A Christological Eschatology’, *RevExp* 72(1975), p. 317. See also König, *The Eclipse*.

³⁵ Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans* (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), p. 314.

³⁶ G. Thomas, ‘A Holy God’ in Brower et al., *Eschatology in Bible and Theology*, p. 55.

considers new creation as central for NT theology, more precisely, 'Christ's life, and especially death and resurrection through the Spirit, launched the glorious end-time new creation of God.'³⁷ This gives the assurance that the distinctive of Christian eschatology lies in the person whom it is about.

4. *Eschatology is inseparable from ethics.* One can discern a growing emphasis on the ethical implications of eschatology in twentieth century theologians. Of course, ethics always played a role in eschatological thinking as the following well-known examples show:

- Postmillennialism and dispensationalism: McClendon is partly right when he regards them as ethics,³⁸ but we have to see that ethics has not got its proper place here. As we have seen, dispensationalism develops a sophisticated system, which often seems to be complete without ethical content. So, morality is only a hidden motive of eschatology here, while the latter functions as its justification.
- Protestant liberalism: It banished eschatology and replaced it with a moralism. Interestingly, this is true also for A. Schweitzer who was among the first emphasising the eschatological nature of Jesus' age and message.³⁹

Our thesis means that we aim not only at an ethics informed by eschatology (O'Donovan, Grenz, McClendon), but also at an eschatology that clearly shows up its ethical nature and conveys ethical content. Therefore we prefer studying the eschatological character of every-day Christianity as it is witnessed in the NT. The scope of eschatology is something which is worth keeping: 'Blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written therein, for the time is near'.(Rev 1:3)

5. *Eschatology, as theology on the whole, has different levels.* Primary eschatology is how we reflect the God who creates everything anew in our faith, life and community. It means that our very being in Christ, our acting, etc., is also eschatology, speaking about the God of the new creation. We are going to study this more deeply in the next chapter. Secondary eschatology reflects critically on what place is given to the God of the new creation, his work and promises in our every-day life? What kind of influences are we exposed to? What traditions and spiritual movements move us? How should we 'speak of God' in our present situation?

³⁷ G. Beale, 'Eschatological Conception' in Brower et al., *Eschatology in Bible and Theology*, p. 20.

³⁸ McClendon, *Doctrine*, p. 73.

³⁹ Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, pp. 7ff.

6. *Eschatology is human speech* in the way Barth speaks about theology. We have to be aware of this often-neglected fact. It is especially important regarding the future: we need trust and humility. ‘Our knowledge is imperfect and our prophecy is imperfect, but when the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away.’ (1Cor 13:9-10). Fulfilment has always been greater than the promise. God is not bound to our conceptions, and we ourselves are invited to take part in an unfolding. ‘Beloved, we are God’s children now, it does not yet appear what we shall be...’ (1Jn 3:2).

(It would be nice to add a seventh point to the above, but I am afraid it would suggest perfection, contradicting our last point.)

Primary eschatologies

I am sure there is much to be discovered in present-day Baptist churches concerning primary eschatologies. Dispensationalism taught us that eschatology is about details of future events, and thus has alienated us from biblical perspectives. An important feature of primary eschatological issues is that they relate to ethics in almost every case, and not by chance. When speaking about primary eschatologies we think of:

‘To be in Christ’

Believers are part of the eschatological reality in their very being ‘in Christ’: *kainé ktisis* (2 Cor 5:17). It is confirmed by the fact that we were resurrected with Christ (Col 2:12) and were given the Spirit as *arrabón* (of the life to come, Eph 1:13-14). We are called to expectant waiting for the return of Christ, yet our hope is quite different from e.g. OT or Jewish expectations, because we are waiting for the one who once came and is with us even now. This points well to the ‘already and not yet’ character of Christian life. Being in Christ is a fact and a programme: ‘If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit’ (Gal 5:25). Hence the paradoxical nature of our existence (in the world, but not of the world, Jn 17:11,14), and the call for holy living. This personal and communal eschatology is mainly expressed in moral transformation (2 Cor 3:18). Or as our Anabaptist forerunners expressed, our calling is for ‘walking in the resurrection of Christ’ (Schleitheim Confession 1). Ethical exhortations in the NT often use eschatological language: both the temporal (Rom 13:11-14) and the spatial (Col 3:1-3) type are relevant. Ethical reasoning is based both on the past (1 Cor 6:20) and the future (1 Jn 3:3, 2 Pt 3:14). It is also noteworthy that Revelation, regarded as dealing with eschatological timetables by many, is first of all a book to be lived (Rev 1:3).

Christian community

The church is God's eschatological community on earth. God's work is manifest in its multicultural nature (Eph 2), which is at the same time the future (Rev 7). Its most important distinguishing mark is love which corresponds to the character of the Triune God (Jn 13:34-35, 17:21).

Mission, evangelism

Mission is an eschatological activity of Christ's people: it spans the period from Pentecost to the Second Coming (Acts 2:17,21) and it is determined by God's saving work in Christ (1 Tim 2:4,7). Instead of speculating on different dates, mission is being a witness of God both individually and corporately (Acts 1:7-8); it is the *content* of mission. Its power is from God's eschatological Spirit, who enables the weak: 'my power is made perfect in weakness' (2 Cor 12:9) as it happened in Christ. It can *result* in driving people from the darkness to the light (Acts 26, Col 1), gathering a multitude before God's throne (Rev 7:9ff) for a future where there is 'no night' (Rev 21:25).

Witnessing, preaching and teaching

Eschatology is not only an inevitable dimension of Christian faith (1 Thess 1:3,10), but it can be wholly grasped from this viewpoint as living in hope (Eph 2:12). Hence witnessing can be understood as giving 'the reason for the hope' that we have. (1 Pt 3:15). The very content of Christian preaching is the gospel that speaks about the eschaton, more precisely, about the God of the new creation. It is a mystery unknown to former generations, but made known in Christ by whom he has spoken to us 'in these last days' (Heb 1:2f). New creation also means salvation, a rescue 'from the dominion of darkness' and being brought 'into the kingdom of the Son' (Col 1:13f). Jesus' last commission, 'to teach them to obey everything I have commanded you' (Mt 28:20), together with the letters, strengthens the importance of ethical teaching in his church.

Worship

Celebration is an integral part of being together in church. We can do that because of what God did, but also because of who he is and what he is going to do. All these time aspects have eschatological references. The future, especially considering Revelation, links horizontal and vertical aspects of eschatology together: the worship we are going to enjoy is a present reality in Heaven (Rev 4-5.). Moreover, we are assured that our prayers enter heavenly worship (Rev 8:3-4).

Baptism

Being baptised means dying and coming to new life with Christ (Rom 6:3ff), being sealed for the coming kingdom of God by the Holy Spirit and becoming a member of the eschatological community on earth. Baptism, as a human response to God's calling, is the doorway to the eschatological promises: forgiveness of sin, resurrection, and eternal life.

Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper set by Christ is for the time 'until he comes' (1 Cor 11:26). It means that it is not only a memorial fellowship, looking back to the Christ event, but also a joyous anticipation of the wedding of the Lamb (Rev 19:7,9). It is an interim table-fellowship, wholly eschatological embracing Christ's work in the past, the present and the future, and sharing the 'already and not yet' characteristic of Christian life.

Prayer

While praying is somehow an integral element of many religions, Christian prayer has special characteristics ('in the name of Jesus'). Taking the Lord's Prayer as the model of how Christ's disciples pray, we find in the request of 'Thy kingdom come' an eschatological motif, which is further confirmed in other texts (e.g. Rom 8:26-27, Col 1:9-14, Rev 5:11-14).

Caritas

Jesus' ministry of preaching the arrival of the kingdom of God involved the signs of its perfectness: exorcisms and healings (Mt 12:22-29), invitation to the outcast, etc. It is simply due to the fact that God's eschatological reign means both the coming of his eternal fellowship or 'dwelling' with people and 'the passing away of the old order of things', of death and pain (Rev 21:3-4). It is also important to note that once speaking about the Last Judgement to his disciples, Jesus set the criteria of going to eternal life in terms of their behaviour towards the poor, the sick, etc. (Mt 25:31-46). Doing what is good, 'excellent and profitable to everyone' and social care, are recurring topics in the epistles. All these give support to Christian caritas in terms of eschatology.

No doubt, there is much more to be studied in primary eschatologies. The above sketch challenges us in our study and teaching and, of course, living eschatologically, which is really nothing but a call to evangelism, holiness and steadfastness, a 'call to action in the present based on God's future'.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, p. 852.

Conclusion

Why do I consider dispensationalism as degenerative? How does this case study help us to understand the dynamics of primary and secondary theologies? There are questions to be answered.

First, dispensationalism is degenerative because it alienates primary eschatology of the communities from scripture and their own heritage. A further apt illustration for the latter is the case of some Mennonite bodies in the USA from the mid-1900s. As Durnbaugh explains this:

The impact of fundamentalism on Anabaptist-oriented church groups is especially noteworthy for the rapid abandonment of the non-resistant or pacifist stance of these groups. The theological basis for this effect comes from the declaration in dispensational understanding that the ethical commandments of Jesus Christ apply not to this age, but to the kingdom era following the Second Coming.⁴¹

Secondly, it often operates as a higher knowledge, i.e. as a kind of gnosis. This hinders many in reading Revelation, instead of teaching how to do this.

Thirdly, dispensationalism distorts Christian ethics, especially by neglecting or putting into brackets the Sermon on the Mount.

Finally, secondary theologising (of any kind) broadens the scope of primary theologies, keeping primary theologies close to scripture and to authentic traditions of the past, and 'to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ' (Eph 4:12).

Dr András Szirtes, sometime Lecturer in Systematic Theology, Baptist Theological Seminary, Budapest.

⁴¹ Donald F. Durnbaugh, 'Anti-Modernism, Dispensationalism, and the Origins of Fundamentalism. A Response to Trollinger' in Johns, *Apocalypticism and Millennialism*, p. 283. Cf. Trollinger, 'How John Nelson Darby Went Visiting', *ibid.*, pp. 264-281.

Book Reviews

Wisdom, Science and the Scriptures: Essays in Honour of Ernest Lucas

Stephen Finamore and John Weaver (eds.)

Oxford: Centre for Baptist History and Heritage and Bristol Baptist College, 2012, 264 pages

ISBN 978-1-907600-13-5

Grounded in Grace: Essays to Honour Ian M Randall

Pieter Lalleman, Peter Morden and Anthony R. Cross (eds.)

London – Didcot: Spurgeon's College – The Baptist Historical Society, 2013, 329 pages

ISBN 978-0-9500682-4-4

The volumes under review pay tribute to two very significant figures in British and wider Baptist life. Ernest Lucas retired from Bristol Baptist College last year, and Ian Randall reached the age of 65 at the beginning of this year. Even to list the chapters in the two volumes would take up most of the review, so I will simply point to some of the themes which re-occur, illustrating as they do strands of European Baptist Studies, to which the two dedicatees of the volumes have devoted their academic lives.

The first point, though, may be to note perhaps one of the most fundamental features of Baptist and baptistic theologies. For though both Ernest Lucas and Ian Randall are extremely significant scholars, not just for Baptists but for the wider ecclesial community in Britain and the rest of Europe and beyond, they are people whose lives are founded in and on their membership in particular church communities. There simply is no division here between the academic and the Christian life, as if they were two utterly distinct fields. Many of the contributions in both volumes pay tribute to this fact.

The beautiful prayers written by Sian Murray Williams at the end of each contribution in the Lucas volume are also a fitting indication of the centrality of a life of prayerful service for both men.

The volume dedicated to Ernest Lucas begins with reflections on the nature of Wisdom in the Bible. The Wisdom literature is, one might say, the Bible's most directly applied theology. The articles in this section also show that the two major interests in Lucas' academic life – theology, specifically Biblical Studies (and more specifically still the Old Testament) and science – cannot be easily divided. So, for example, John Bimson's

contribution on Job in the first section touches on science, whilst Paul Fiddes, in a typically rich piece in the section on science and religion, deals in detail with the Wisdom literature in the Bible as he investigates the place of *hokmah*, wisdom, in medicine.

The link between science and religion may not be traditionally termed a Baptist particular, and yet it might be argued that it should increasingly be seen as such, or at least as an integral part of much European Baptist life. To quote a non-Baptist, the Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, ‘the world is charged with the grandeur of God’, and the recognition of that fact is something that Baptist scientists and others have responded to. Brian Haymes asks in his essay what makes belief in God rational, which reminds us that there is more than one way of engaging with the world, and that reductionism, from or to whichever position, is always likely to end up in absurdity.

Whatever the role of science, there is of course no doubt that since the very first group in Amsterdam, pondering on the Scriptures has been at the heart of Baptist life, and that is fully reflected here, not least given Ernest Lucas’ contribution as a biblical scholar. But the three essays in this section show that there is also a rich diversity in this devotion to the Word of God spoken through the Scriptures.

The final essay by Rob Ellis comes out of a reflection on Lucas’ love of cricket. Any theology book that contains thoughts on cricket, theology and Puritans, as well as a reference to the YouTube footage of Shane Warne’s remarkable dismissal of Mike Gatting, is already worth reading, and it is a fitting conclusion to an interesting and wide-ranging collection of essays.

The Festschrift for Ian Randall reflects an equally broad range of interests. Ian Randall is well-known to readers of the Journal of European Baptist Studies, as one of its founder-editors. Some flavour of Ian’s own contribution to Baptist (and more broadly Evangelical) scholarly life can be seen in the lengthy (but still selected) bibliography of his writings at the end of the book. These cover a number of areas, especially the history of Baptist institutions and missions, Anabaptists, mission and spirituality.

For us who have the privilege to teach at the International Baptist Theological Seminary, perhaps Ian’s major academic contribution has been his pioneering work in encouraging historical reflection on Baptist life in continental Europe, though the volume also reflects his work on British Baptist history, where he has been the guide to many more recent scholars (one of whom, Peter Morden, is an editor and contributor to the book under review). This is reflected with essays on Baptists in the Czech Lands

(Lydie Kucová) and on an Estonian Baptist Adam Podin (Toivo Pilli), as well as Keith Jones' essay on the European Baptist Federation at the time of the collapse of the USSR.

Another field to which Ian Randall has made a major contribution is in his work on evangelical spirituality and revival, especially in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and again that is reflected in the Festschrift. This has always been more than simply historical recording, as is perhaps best testified in Anthony Cross's significant contribution on Baptist baptismal spirituality. A similar testament to the way in which Baptists and all Evangelicals are called to live out their faith in a spirit of humble witness is found in John Colwell's theologically stimulating essay.

The title of this volume in honour of Ian Randall is a helpful summary of the contents. For, in one or another, all the contributions are grounded (cf., for example, the title of Lina Andronovienė's essay with her reference to primary evangelical theology) in the life of the churches, today, but also yesterday and tomorrow. They are grounded in a firm belief in the action of God's grace in the world, in the power of the Spirit to transform and conform communities and individuals to Christ. Because the communities are different, in distinct times and places, the ways in which this happens vary, but the underlying truth remains the same and it is caught in nearly all of the contributions to this volume.

These two volumes are very different in terms of their contributors and the themes they cover. Yet they do offer a fascinating and deeply encouraging, snapshot of the strength of Baptist scholarship in the second decade of the twenty-first century. Stephen Bevans and Roger Schroeder wrote a well-known book on mission, *Constants in Context*, and reading these volumes, it is readily apparent that they demonstrate firmly the existence of Baptist constants, always incarnated anew and afresh in the diverse contexts in which Baptists find themselves around Europe and the world.

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Recovering the Evangelical Sacrament: Baptisma Semper Reformandum

Anthony R. Cross

Pickwick Publications, Eugene, Oregon, 2013. 381 pages

ISBN 978-1-62032-809-5

Baptism: Historical, Theological and Pastoral Perspectives

Gordon L Heath and James D Dvorak (eds.)

Pickwick Publications, Eugene, Oregon, 2011. 257 pages

ISBN 13: 978-1-60899-486-1

Waters of Promise: Finding Meaning in Believer Baptism

Brandon C Jones

Pickwick Publications, Eugene, Oregon, 2012. 170 pages

ISBN 13: 978-1-61097-628-2

The recovery of interest in a deeper, more sacramental view of Believer's Baptism has been a theme of much European writing and publishing from within the Baptist tradition in recent years. Paul Fiddes, Brian Haymes, Christopher Ellis, Richard Kidd and Anthony R. Cross have all contributed to a recovery of a deeper and more robust theology of baptism building on earlier biblical work by George Beasley-Murray and then, later, reflective work by Alec Gilmore, Neville Clark and others.

This progression within the isles has been joined by authors from North America such as Stanley K. Fowler and Steven R. Harmon, who had works published on baptismal sacramental theology in the United Kingdom. Now, however, Wipf and Stock publishers, through their Pickwick imprint, have launched, in the space of months, three important works on the same theme of the recovery of a more robust baptismal sacramental theology. The most recent and substantial is the work by Anthony R. Cross. He explores the current state of the baptismal debate and looks afresh at conversion-baptism-initiation, but then launches out into a review of the ecumenical rallying-cry 'one baptism' as well as 'water and spirit baptism' as he seeks to press the point that Christian baptism is both water and Spirit and must not be de-hydrated in the way some have posited. He argues strongly for baptism to be in the context of the Church, the community of disciples. His conclusion is a robust call for evangelicals to embrace a deeper, more central theology of baptism, as conversion-baptism was in the New Testament. Cross builds on his earlier, substantial volume *Baptism and the Baptists* (Paternoster Press: 2000) and his contribution to

Dimensions of Baptism (Sheffield Academic Press: 2002) which he edited with Stanley E. Porter.

Anthony R. Cross also contributes a chapter to *Baptism: Historical, Theological and Pastoral Perspectives*. This is a book published in the McMaster Theological Study series and offers contemporary reflection on baptismal theology and practice in a range of traditions including Anglican, Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Pentecostal and the non-baptising Quakers. As with any such collection the value of each chapter is varied, though the authors are all suitably distinguished and erudite. Whilst there are many books produced reflecting aspects of different baptismal traditions and much work has emanated from the Faith and Order Commission of the WCC on 'baptism', the editors claim this is the first attempt to bring together, in one volume, chapters by authors from Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant and Radical Reformation Christian traditions. As such, it deserves a place on seminary library bookshelves. The authors weave some common threads such as the importance of Romans 6 and the reflection on the importance of the corporate/communal aspect of baptism.

The third book by Brandon C. Jones, pastor of a Baptist Church in South Dakota, represents a view from the reformed wing of Southern Baptist life by an author whose doctorate is from Calvin Theological Seminary in Michigan. He demonstrates that the recovery of a fuller, more biblical and sacramental understanding of baptism is not now confined to European scholars, or those in North America with strong ties to European Baptist thinking, but has entered the arena of debate within the ordnance-only Baptists of the Southern Convention. Maybe Brandon Jones will shine a light into the dark corners of minimalist Baptist practice prevalent in many Baptist churches which have been influenced by majority ordnance thinking in the Southern Baptist theological spectrum. The author, inevitably, draws on many British Baptist scholars to argue his case, but nevertheless the intended audience is clearly Baptists of the southern states in the USA and he cites approvingly English Particular Baptist practices of the 1700s, which presumably resonates well with current Calvinistic theological trends in several seminaries. Naturally, his position is in favour of baptising believers and rejecting the approach of those who do not engage in so-called re-baptism.

The three books each offer their own specific insight into the contemporary baptismal debate and the interaction between them would certainly be the stuff of lively seminars.

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Hospitality and Community after Christendom

Andrew Francis

Paternoster, Milton Keynes, 2012. 161 pages

ISBN 978-1-84227-747-8

This book is part of the *After Christendom* series and thus, as is to be expected, is written in the context of radical reformation thinking and as a resource for the emerging Christian ecclesial communities who develop their lives in a post Christendom context.

I first came across the author, Andrew, when he was a United Reformed Church minister in Leeds and, like me, was struggling to address the massive challenges facing the so-called Free Churches in the north of England. Alan and Eleanor Kreider introduced both of us into what became the Anabaptist Network. There we found Christian stimulus for our concerns out of an Anabaptist heritage and in realising that some of the challenges faced and responded to by the left wing of the Reformation in the 1500s could have a value for the north of England in the twentieth/twenty-first centuries.

Many years on, this book demonstrates the theological and missiological journey that Andrew entered into. The book takes us from the Hebrew Scriptures to powerful ideas for the community of the Kingdom in which eating meals plays a crucial part. Andrew builds on the work of others, but there is a strength and originality to this book which deserves attention. He rightly draws attention to the importance of meal-eating in the Second Testament narrative. Too easily baptistic Christians want to concentrate on the Upper Room and ignore the 'quantitative eating' which occurs in all the Gospels and continues into the early church.

In a narrative charting his own developmental journey, Andrew brings us in touch with various developments in the United Kingdom church landscape from the 1960s until today which re-focused ecclesial life around meals and around disciples seeking to live in community. Readers will engage with this in different ways, but it is a helpful device to bring us to the point of reflecting on the quest for visionary leadership, the search for an authentic believing community which engages with society, not in the 'old' way of Christendom, but in a realistic post-modern way.

Here he advocates that ecclesial groups should practise hospitality, looking in a fresh and serious way at the community described in Acts 2. 42-47, where economic and culinary sharing was key. Andrew does not proscribe exactly one model, but he does encourage fresh reflection on

what a gathering, intentional, convictional community which is missional, might look like.

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Fullerism as Opposed to Calvinism

A. Chadwick Mauldin

Wipf and Stock, Eugene, Oregon. 2011. 115 pages

ISBN 978-1-60899-832-6

It is popular within general Baptist history to recall the scene of William Carey engaging with his pastor colleagues in the Northamptonshire Association regarding his conviction that there should be an endeavour to reach out to the non-Christian world with the message of the Gospel. The robust Calvinism of the day provided the response which has gone down in popular Baptist and missionary history as ‘sit down young man, if God wants to convert the heathen he can do it without your help’. Andrew Fuller, another pastor, was also present and attributed to him is that other saying ‘if you go down the mines, I will hold the rope’. This everyday Baptist history, perhaps lacking in accuracy, but certainly not in enthusiastic retelling, is imbibed in most Sunday Schools; the popular account of how Northamptonshire pastors started the modern Protestant mission movement with a modified form of Calvinism focused on the ideas of Andrew Fuller. Yet, beyond this simple historiography deep theological issues are at stake.

Peter J Morden engaged in depth with the theology of Andrew Fuller in his classic study *Offering Christ to the World: Andrew Fuller and the Revival of English Particular Baptist Life*.

Now, Chadwick Maudlin focuses on one specific aspect of ‘Fullerism’ by engaging in a historical and theological comparison of the missiology of Andrew Fuller and Jean Calvin. He does so with a ‘tilt’ at the current debate within Southern Baptist life that Jean Calvin and his systematic theology is the proper base for any genuine Baptist ecclesial and theological structure. As Malcolm B. Yarnell of Southwestern Seminary comments on the cover of the book, ‘it is his [Fuller’s] theological principles that define contemporary Baptists more adequately than the... principles of the Genevan Reformer, John Calvin’. So might we interpret *Fullerism as Opposed to Calvinism* as Southwestern Seminary versus Southern Seminary? Yet, beyond the debate amongst Southern Baptists there is a very serious theological and missiological emphasis which is

being articulated. To this the author devotes 71 pages. The remaining part of the book consists of two Appendices. The first is the transcript of an interview with James Leo Garrett, a leading Southern Baptist theologian, now retired, and Appendix B is a helpful collection of correspondence between Fuller and Carey.

For a substantial reflection on Andrew Fuller read Peter Morden, though Chadwick Maudlin is a good propagandist for a Baptist missional ecclesiology which should not be stifled by a classic Reformed position.

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